THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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A GRAY HAIR.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

To-day, as I glanced in the mirror,
I started with sudden fright,
For there on my brow was gleaming
A little line of white.
I knew what it meant, and I shivered
To see the signal there,—
The signal of old age coming—
The first bright, silver hair!

What a sudden thrill ran o'er me
At sight of that silver thread!
It told that life's sands were dropping,
That the days of my youth were dead.
And I sat down, dim and blinded,
By a sudden rain of tears,
As I thought of heart-wealth squandered
In many misspent years.

On the Record-Book of Heaven,
Against my name to-day,
Are there any good deeds written,
Oh, Angel of Record, say?
Ah me! I fear for your answer,
For I know that written there
Is a record of sin and error
That moves you to sorrowful prayer.

I am growing old, and the angel
Who weeps o'er each sinful deed,
Has hung out this warning signal,
And bids me be wise and heed.
It seems to me like a question
Whose import is deep and stern,
Shall my future be purer and better?
Will I from my idols turn?

God help me! He helpeth many
Who out of their sorrow call.
My past is beyond redemption;
In the future I stand or fall.
May I heed this solemn warning,
And the pitying angel's prayer,
Ere the night comes darkly downward
On my head of silver hair.

Jasper Onslow's Wife.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU,

AUTHOR OF "THE COST OF CONQUEST," ETC.

[This serial was commenced in No. 37. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

"BANK NOTES!" JASPER ONSLOW WAS LITERALLY STUPEFIED WITH HIS GOOD FORTUNE."

CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE LID OF THE WELL.

'Tis strange, but true, for truth is always strange—
Stranger than fiction. —*Byron.*

Muriel rose early on the morning of Jabez Colliver's departure, and prepared breakfast and dressed her child before her husband returned.

"He'll be so tired," she thought, as she hastened to set things straight. "I must make him lie down and take a good sleep while baby and I go and mind the shop. Mind the shop!" she repeated, laughing softly to herself. "What a notion! Who would ever have thought that I should come to minding a shop, and being contented to do it?"

She went about preparing a tempting little meal for her husband, talking and singing little snatches of songs to her boy, who was kicking and crowing lustily on the floor, and making frantic attempts to get up on his fat legs, and was so occupied that she did not hear the door open and Jasper come in. He was in the room and by her side before she saw him, and then she started back with a cry at the sight of his pale face and haggard appearance.

"Jasper," she exclaimed, "what is the matter? What has happened?"

"The matter! What do you mean?"

"What ails you?"

"Nothing."

"You look dreadfully deathlike; look at yourself in the glass. Whatever have you been doing?"

She drew him to the looking-glass as she spoke, and made him look at himself. He started violently at the reflection of his face and figure, it was so different from his ordinary trim neatness. His hair was wild and dishevelled, and his face ashy pale, save for a hectic spot which burned on either cheek. His eyes were sunken and dim, and dark rings under them told of his sleepless night.

"I don't look very bright, I must say," he said, with a nervous laugh. "I suppose I am not such a Titan of strength as I fancied myself. I shall be all right presently."

"But your clothes, Jasper—whatever have you been about? You are all over dust and whitewash; and look how you have torn your coat. There's a piece right out of the sleeve."

"So there is. It don't add to its beauty much, does it? I was very busy all night lifting and moving all sorts of things. Don't stare at me in that uncomfortable way, but pour me out some tea while I wash my face and hands and have a brush."

But she did stare at him. She could not make him out, his manner was so strange, and she came to the conclusion that he must have had something to drink, which had acted on an empty stomach and made him appear so odd. He looked more like himself when he emerged from the bedroom with his hair in its usual order and another coat on, though he was pale and haggard still.

"That's better," he said, as he sat down to breakfast, and Muriel heaped his plate with the most tempting morsels she could find and put his cup close to his hand. "I feel more like myself now."

"You look more like yourself. So he's really gone?"

"Gone!"

"Yes—Mr. Colliver. Why, you had got into a brown study, Jasper."

"Had I? Yes, he's gone."

"Did he seem in good spirits when he went away?"

"I suppose so. I did not notice anything particular about him. What makes you ask, Muriel?"

"Because—well, I hardly know why—I wish he hadn't gone, Jasper. I feel as though we should never see him again, poor old man."

"What nonsense you do talk! Here, take this away—I can't eat. I suppose I have fasted too long."

"Indeed, you have, dear," Muriel said. "Do try and eat a mouthful—you will be so faint."

"I couldn't—it would choke me," he said, sharply. "Don't worry me, Muriel; let me alone."

"That's just what I mean to do," she replied. "You must lie down and rest, and I'll take my work over to the Manor and sit there in case any one comes."

"No, you won't! You are not to go there, do you hear, Muriel? You must not go there without me—never alone, mind that."

"My dear Jasper, what nonsense! I have been to the Manor dozens of times, and you must rest. Baby and I will keep house while you sleep."

"I tell you you shall not! I won't have it! How dare you contradict me?"

And while she stared at him in amazement at his words and manner, a blank darkness seemed to come over his eyes, and clutching at the air, as it seemed, to steady himself, he sank in an insensible heap at her feet.

Muriel's terrified shrieks brought up the landlady and her husband. They raised him between them, and laid him on the bed.

"Dead! Law bless you, my dear, no, he ain't," the landlady said, in answer to Muriel's frightened face and incoherent words. "He's all right—it's a faint. Maybe he's a bit overtired, that's all."

It seemed so, for Jasper presently opened his eyes, and said something to the same effect. He would lie still for awhile, he said, and Muriel might just go to the Manor and see that all was right.

"What made you say just now I was not to go?" she asked, after she had administered some brandy to her husband, and saw him look a little more like himself once more.

"Did I say so?"

"Most emphatically," she replied, with a smile. "I never heard you speak so before."

"I don't think I quite knew what I was saying. I have felt dizzy ever since I came in."

"I think it would be better for one of us to be there," she said. "If you want me, or feel worse, you will send for me at once?"

"I shan't need to. All I want is sleep, I think; and, Muriel——"

"Yes, dear."

"Don't go prowling and lifting things about. The place is very untidy; but we'll have it cleaned up in a day or two. Don't you touch anything, there's a dear."

"I shall only sit quietly in the shop with my work. I'm not fit for much exertion just now. Come, baby, kiss papa, and we'll go."

It was a very lukewarm kiss that Jasper Onslow bestowed upon his son, and Muriel remarked upon the fact.

"Oh, don't bother me," said her husband, laughing. "And, Muriel, just hang that coat somewhere else, will you? I'm nervous, I suppose, and it seems to worry me."

"You must be nervous," she said; but she took the coat with the torn sleeve from the peg, and hung it where he could not see it.

Then she kissed him, and went away with her baby on her arm and the key of the old house in her pocket. The echoes seemed to her unusually hollow and sounding as she flung back the heavy door and went into the passage, and she was glad to get into the brighter and more familiar-looking shop.

"It is because I know there is no one here," she said to herself, as she took out her work and sat down to wile away the morning, till Jasper should feel well enough to come back. "But the place feels like a grave for all that—like a house feels when death is in it."

It was quite a relief when a man came to the door on some trivial errand, and stood talking for a moment.

"It's pleasant to see you here, ma'am," he said. "The old Manor and its master are very different since you came."

"Improved, I hope," she said.

"You may say that, ma'am. He was as disagreeable an old bear as ever I see before your husband and you joined him. He's better now. He give me good morning quite friendly when he went away."

"Were you here when he went away?" asked Muriel, scarcely knowing what prompted her to put the question.

"Out by, ma'am. I was just going down to the shore when I see him come out, and very tottering and frail he seemed. I wondered as some one wasn't with him."

"He wouldn't let any one go with him," Muriel replied. "I wanted him to take my husband, but he wouldn't hear of it."

"Ah, that's just his way, ma'am. I hope he'll come back safe, poor old fellow. He was quiet enough in his way, and Limehouse wouldn't seem to get on without him."

She knew the man well—a boatman who had often done odd jobs for her husband, and somehow it was a relief to speak to some one who had seen Jabez Colliver that morning. Every one seemed to share her uneasiness about him except Jasper; but men with plenty of occupation are apt to be slow to notice the signs of weakness or illness in others, and he had marked no special signs of illness about the old man. Then her thoughts strayed oddly to Jasper's torn coat. It kept presenting itself to her mind with a strange persistence.

It was rather a peculiar coat—a house jacket made by herself out of a piece of dark brown Indian stuff given her by Jabez, who had turned over quite a pile of drapery goods to her for her use. Very thankfully she had accepted them, and made her boy gay with velvet and brocade and pieces of rare lace. She had a dress of a curious Indian fabric that made her look, the old man declared, like a fairy princess, and Jasper had a comfortable, Chinese-looking dressing gown and this coat, the most sober-hued garment of the lot.

He wore it all day and every day over his work, and the Manor being so near, and Limehouse people not very particular, he generally went backwards and forwards in it.

She was pondering how she should mend it, for she had not a bit of the stuff left, when she suddenly remembered a great basket of odds and ends that generally stood in a corner of the shop. Jabez Colliver used to thrust all sorts of things into it which he sorted out from among his purchases, and she was free to go to it when she wanted scraps or anything of no value.

"There may be a bit," she said. "I'll look; but I am afraid it will be in vain. Why, where is the basket gone to? It used to be here."

It had been moved, and she sought in vain in one or two of the old rooms where things of small value were sometimes stowed away.

"They must have taken it into that horrid room," she said to herself. "Ugh! I hate to go there! I wonder if the door is open."

She had a strange dislike to the queer back room with the old well in it, and she quite shivered as she tried the door. It was locked—that is, the key had been turned, but Jasper had not shut it close, so that the shot bolt was useless, and she went through. The air of the passage seemed to strike dull and heavy, and she almost retraced her steps, so nervous did she feel.

"Pshaw! what a fool I am!" she said, going forward. "It is the thought of that dreadful well, I suppose. Well, I needn't look at it."

The basket she was looking for was there, but not a bit of anything could she find that would serve her purpose, and she turned to go. Something caught her eye, hanging, as it were, to the lid of the well, and stooping down, she tried to pull it away. It was firmly held between the wood and the brickwork, and Muriel let it go with a faint shriek, as though an asp had stung her. It was the missing piece of the coat she had hung up out of Jasper's sight before she had come away.

CHAPTER XX.

A MADMAN.

Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. —*Shakespeare.*

Muriel stared at the bit of brown rag in terrified astonishment.

"How did it come there?" she asked herself, and then she laughed at her own fears.

Of course Jasper had been kneeling there, doing something on the floor, and had caught his sleeve. But her heart beat thick and fast as she pulled at it. It came away in her hand, but not before she had seen and felt that it had not been caught on anything, but held between the lid and the edge of the well.

She turned away, sick and giddy, to go back to the front of the house to her child, when a slight noise over her head, and a sudden diminution of the light, made her look up, and she saw a man's face looking down at her through the skylight. It was a dark, wild-looking face, and seemed to hold her entranced with sick terror, as it glared at her with evil-looking eyes. The skylight was a little open, but it was heavily barred underneath, so that the man, if he had any evil intent, could not get at her that way. But he did not seem to have any; he was laughing in a dazed, idiotic sort of way, and watching her, apparently much amused.

"You can't lift the lid," he said. "But he did—ha, ha! I can tell what he hid there. I know."

"What is hidden there?"

"Treasure—such a treasure—one that the rats will find; but not the diamond, no, not the diamond. He took that. I saw him hide it."

"He—who?"

"The man who went out and came back again—the wolf in sheep's clothing, the daw in borrowed feathers. He thought it was all secret; but I was up here watching. I couldn't come down for fear they would catch me. You won't let them catch me, will you?"

"Who are you, and what do you want?" asked Muriel, in extreme terror, beginning to have a faint glimmering that the man was mad, but not feeling particularly reassured thereby.

"Who am I? Well, I must not tell that till I've seen Teresa—I promised Teresa I wouldn't. She is my——"

"Your what?"

"Ah, that's just what I mustn't tell. I want to get to her; I'm going to kill her. But that's a secret, and I came to him for some money. He'll give it me when he comes up from the well. I'm waiting for him."

"Down the well!" gasped Muriel, terrified almost beyond endurance, yet fascinated by the strange creature's words into listening to him.

"What do you mean? What do you mean?"

"I'll come down and tell you," he said. "Wait for me!"

His moving away from the window broke the spell which seemed to be upon her, and with a terrified cry she fled back into the shop, and throwing herself into a chair, she burst into a fit of hysterical tears.

She was sobbing in short, quick gasps, and did not hear the footsteps of three persons who entered the shop, and were standing staring at her in the most unqualified amazement.

"Beg pardon, mum," said the first, a policeman who knew her well by sight. "Is anything wrong?"

"Not much, thank you," she said, drying her eyes. "I have been a little frightened, that is all."

"Can we see Mr. Onslow?" the man asked. "I know Mr. Colliver is gone."

"Yes, he went this morning," she answered, "and Mr. Onslow is not here either, but I can take any message for him. I am very glad to see you, policeman," she said, quite recovered from her agitation, "for I have just been terribly frightened, and——"

"By a man, miss," struck in one of the strangers; "a powerful, rather formidable-looking man, but perfectly polite and respectful?"

"Yes," she replied, wondering. "By a man certainly."

"Rather muddish-looking, eh?" he asked.

"Very."

"Black eyes and hair, and a big scar on his face?"

"I didn't see any scar, but his hair was black."

"And he talked nonsense?"

"What seemed to me such—something about Teresa."

"Our man, mate, for a sovereign," he said, turning to his companion. "Where is he, miss?"

"He was on the roof of a room at the back there. I did not see which way he went."

She led them through the house into the back yard, a tiny, three-cornered morsel of ground, shut in by high walls, and let them reconnoitre.

"He couldn't climb there," the policeman said; "he must be in the house."

"Will you please to point out the way to the upper rooms, miss?" the man asked again; "and don't you look so frightened—there's nothing wrong. He ain't dangerous—leastways he won't be when we've caught him; but he's mad, and we've come a many miles to look after him."

She pointed the way up stairs, and stood in the shop, clasping her boy in her arms, and listening in terror while they went up to search for the lunatic.

Then she heard a scuffle, and wild oaths, and stunning blows, and knew that he was caught. She was thankful, though frightened, and she sprang with a cry of joy to her husband's arms, just as they brought him bound and begrimed with dirt down-stairs.

Jasper was better, though very pale still, and with a strange set expression on his face. The landlady had burst into his room with the astounding intelligence that there was something wrong at the Manor, for that the policemen there were searching the house.

"Searching the house!" he exclaimed. "What for?"

"I don't know, sir," she replied. "They do say something dreadful has happened, I can't rightly learn what."

Out he rushed, "with a face like death," the woman declared, and was much relieved to find that it was nothing worse than a search for an escaped lunatic that was afoot.

"My darling, you must come here no more alone," he said, clasping Muriel in his arms, and striving to soothe her agitation. "I cannot have you terrified like this."

"It was very foolish of me, dear; but the poor creature said such dreadful things," she said, with a shiver.

"What about?"

"About some one being down that well, and about treasures and diamonds hidden somewhere."

"The usual style of lunatic talk. I'll take you home, dear, and then I'll go to the station and find out who the poor creature is, and where he comes from. You must come no more to the Manor without me till—till Mr. Colliver returns; promise me you will not."

"I don't think I shall want to," she said, shivering. "It seems a place full of horrors, Jasper."

She did not tell him of the piece of cloth she had found and hidden away in her pocket; somehow she could not speak of it now—of the nameless horror it had caused her. Another time she would ask her husband how it came there, and he would tell her; but not now, the dread was too fresh—she could not speak her fears.

Jasper took her home and went to the police office to see who it was who had so frightened his wife.

There was no mystery about it now. The man was an escaped lunatic from a private asylum in Leicestershire, his name Henry Maynard, and the two men were keepers from the establishment sent out to search for him. He was covered with dust and perspiration when Jasper Onslow saw him, and his face was bruised and his lip cut from a blow given by the taller of the two keepers, whom he had tried to bite; but for all that it seemed as though the distorted features were familiar to him, and that he had seen them before.

"I think not, sir," the keeper said. "He does not belong to these parts."

"Where does he belong to?"

"Liverpool way, somewhere. At least, the doctor had him from there, and I wish he was back there, I do," he added, eyeing his patient with a look the reverse of affectionate.

"Why? Is he dangerous?"

"Worrysome, sir, worrysome—not exactly dangerous, but more difficult to deal with. It's easy with the dangerous ones—we know what to do with them. A straight jacket and a padded room, and there you are; but his sort, specially when the orders is as they've to be treated well, are the deuce and all to deal with."

"Then he has friends?"

"None as ever I heard of; but for all that he's well paid for, and the orders is to treat him very kind and all that, and see what it comes to. Ugh! you brute, I'd as lief have a wild beast to deal with as you."

The madman, thus apostrophised, made no reply, but kept his eyes fixed on Jasper Onslow with a wild, malignant stare.

"I'm coming," he said, in answer to a rough push from his keeper. "There's no hurry. I won't tell the secret now, but by and by, when I have found Teresa and killed her. I'll bring her here and put her down the well along with you know who, and then we'll wear the jewels and spend the money—ha! ha! ha!"

"There, then, get him away, my men," said the superintendent. "And take better care of him for the future. What nonsense these madmen do talk, to be sure!"

They took him away in a cab, and Jasper stood a few minutes in the station chatting about the Manor and Jabez Colliver.

"I'm glad he has left some one in charge this time," the superintendent said. "That old house has been a nuisance to us when he has been away before. Last time he went away it was two months before we heard of him."

"He's very eccentric in some things," Jasper said, looking out of the window. "He told us not to be frightened if we did not hear from him."

"Do you think he is fit to go about in that odd way? Two of my men saw him this morning, and they say he looked unusually feeble and tottering."

"My wife did all she could to persuade him not to go," Jasper said; "but it was o no use, his mind was too firmly made up."

"Well, I hope no harm will come to him, poor old fellow; he was a queer old man, but harmless and kind-hearted enough."

No tidings came from Jabez Colliver, and Muriel went no more to the Manor. The impression of what had passed in the room with the well in it grew fainter as the days wore on, and she was beginning to laugh at her own fears, and to regard the torn rag she had found as an accident. She rolled the coat and the rag up together, and put them away.

"Some day I will have a talk to Jasper about it," she said to herself.

But the day never came, and the longer the time that passed the more difficult it seemed to broach the subject.

Christmas came, with its songs of peace on earth and good-will to men, and while the bells were chiming from a hundred steeples their song of welcome on the morning of our Church's jubilee, a little daughter came to Muriel's arms like a token of the peace and joy whose herald the angels that sang at Bethlehem proclaimed themselves to be.

Muriel her name was to be—her mother's name.

The baby was a week old when a telegram came to Jasper from France. He hastily tore it open and read—

"*From Alphonse Lemaitre, priest, Carcassonne, Languedoc, to Jasper Onslow, Marling Manor, Limehouse, London.*—

"*Come at once. M. Onslow is dying—cannot live many days.*"

"You will go, of course," Muriel said. "I am quite well now, and there is nothing to keep you."

"Yes, I shall go. You won't mind, will you?"

"Oh, no, not a bit."

She looked up in some surprise as she spoke, for his voice had sounded hoarse and strange, and she saw, to her amazement, that he was ashy pale, and trembling as if with an ague fit. Great drops of perspiration stood upon his face, and his lips were blue, as though some terrible fear had seized him.

"Jasper," she cried, "What is the matter? Are you ill?"

"No, dear."

"Then what ails you?"

"Nothing. Why do you ask?"

"You look dreadfully."

"I was startled, that was all. Poor old fellow! So the end is coming at last. We shall come into our fortune at last, Muriel."

He locked up the Manor, and went away to France that night, but he had not recovered from the shock of the telegram when he left. When he kissed Muriel his lips and cheeks were as cold as ice, and she lay awake nearly all night wondering why he should be so terribly affected over the death of this stranger cousin.

CHAPTER XXI.

RICHARD ONSLOW'S LEGACY.

Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Good or bad a thousand fold,
How widely its agencies vary!
—*Hood.*

Father Alphonse Lemaitre had not overstated the fact when he telegraphed to Jasper Onslow that his cousin was dying. A few days of life there might be in his parishioner of so many years, but the end was at hand.

Carcasonne was the nearest post town, and from thence he had despatched his message. Although Richard Onslow was a Protestant, he and the good Catholic clergyman were firm friends. After the first few months of the Englishman's residence in his parish, Father Lemaitre had ceased from any attempt to proselytize the new-comer, and found that neither he nor his church suffered in any way from the Englishman not being of their creed.

He was charitable and open-handed enough for a man of limited means, relieving want where he knew of it, and giving to the church as freely as though it had been his own; but for all that the country people chose to think him niggardly, because they elected to believe he was a miser, with hoards of untold wealth hidden away in some nook or corner of the old house he had dwelt in so long.

"They will soon be undeceived," he said to his friend the priest, as he sat by him on a stormy evening, two days after despatching the telegram to Jasper. "They will know all very soon now. I hope I shall last another day—till that boy comes. I want to see him once more."

"You will last many days yet, please Heaven," the priest replied.

"Not many—my sands are run out. I begin to think I have wasted my life here, father."

"No life is wasted wherein there is aught of good," the priest replied; "and you have done a great deal here, and you are going to do more."

"How?"

"Are you not leaving your money to a man who is poor—who has a wife and little child whom it will benefit?"

"Ay, true. She is a good wife to him, I hear. I have managed to hear a good deal of them, one way and another. His wife has been his saviour and his safeguard. The Bible speaks truly when it says that 'A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband.'"

"Yes," was the reply, with a little sigh.

Father Lemaitre was always very tender in speaking of women. It may be in the dim past, before he had vowed his vows and shorn his crown, his hopes had been of a happy home, a loving wife and little children to climb his knees and pat their chubby lips to his with loving kisses. But such visions were sinful now, and he had his pious home, his breviary, and the old crone who waited on him to amuse him when his daily labors were over, and he was content in the firm belief that the less of love and joy in this life the more fullness of blessing there would be in the life to come.

But he was a kind neighbor and a fatherly priest, and nearly all of comfort that Richard Onslow knew in his lonely life he owed to his friend the priest.

After a time he returned to the subject of Jasper Onslow.

"I wish he would come," he said. "I would fain see him once again. He has his mother's eyes."

"You knew her, then?"

"I loved her."

He stopped abruptly, and the priest knew intuitively that she was the woman for love of whom Richard Onslow had spent a long, lonely life of seclusion.

"She loved my cousin better," he went on presently. "It was natural, perhaps. Jasper was handsome, richer, more attractive in every way than I was; but I don't think his riches made her more happy than my love would have done. Poor Sylvia! I never saw her after her wedding day."

"You will see her again now."

"Yes, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage. Her portrait will come to her son, with all my worldly goods."

"You will make him rich?"

"No."

Father Lemaitre looked at the dying man with inquiring eyes. He was almost inclined to share the popular belief that he was wealthy; but there was truth on the dying lips—he was sure of that.

"No, not rich," Richard Onslow said. "I can leave him a little. Reach me that desk, father. I should like you to see what I have done with what I have to leave."

The priest reached a little black desk that stood on a table by the bed and opened it. Its contents were few. A bundle or two of letters, the ink faded and the paper yellow with age, a lock of hair, and the will—a document of some six months old.

"Read it," he said to Father Lemaitre. "Let me hear it once more that I may be sure nothing is omitted."

It was very short. A legacy of fifty pounds to the priest himself; the same sum to his church, to be expended as he should see fit; a few trifling bequests to some old people about—his old servant especially—amounting in all to some sixty or seventy pounds; and the rest of his property, whatever he might die possessed of, to his cousin, Jasper Onslow, for his use solely and unconditionally.

Nothing could be clearer. Everything was set down except the amount of the money, which was not stated.

The priest remarked the fact.

"What does it signify?" Richard Onslow said. "He is to have it all."

"Is it so much, then, that it cannot be specified?"

"I'm afraid it is so little that it would look mean if set down," the sick man said. "About two thousand five hundred pounds English money, and this old house and furniture—that's all. Don't look incredulous, father. I am dying, and the truth comes out in such a moment. I have not a farthing in the world beyond what I have stated."

"No. Men don't go out of the world with a lie on their lips," the priest reflected. "I suppose people have been wrong in fancying he had money. I have never seen anything to warrant such a supposition."

Even while he cogitated, the jingling of wheels and cracking of a whip announced the arrival of Jasper Onslow, who was presently ushered into the room of his dying relative.

Very pale and wan he looked, as if he had just arisen from a long illness, and the priest noticed that he trembled all over as he took his cousin's hand.

He declared himself well, however, only a little tired, and seeing there was no immediate occasion for his presence, he retired to the room prepared for him to rest and refresh himself.

Richard Onslow lived two days after his arrival—long enough for them to have a quiet talk of what the old man had to leave, and for Jasper to inspect the house that was soon to be his, and to see the will which set forth so clearly what his cousin wanted done with his property.

The end came at last. Quietly and peacefully the old man died, expressing his pleasure at having a kinsman near him to close his eyes, and his thankfulness at being spared any great suffering.

Strangely enough, almost his very last words related to his supposed wealth.

"I hope I have not disappointed any one," he said. "If my neighbors thought me rich it was through no hint of mine."

"You are not to blame for it," the priest replied. "Never heed it now."

"But I should like the truth to be known," he persisted; he seemed strangely eager on the subject. "I have nothing but what is set down there."

"It shall be known—be content."

"I would have done so much more if I had had the means; but all I have is for her son—Sylvia's son."

Father Lemaitre could hardly understand Jasper's agitation over his cousin's death—there seemed such a curious eagerness about him, such suppressed excitement in his eyes. The relationship between them was not near enough to warrant such sorrow, and they were almost strangers to each other. It seemed when the last moment came, and the old man lay dying, with his cousin's hand in his, as though he must break away from that last living clasp, and go and hide his trembling and his agitation in the solitude of his own room.

He was more composed by the day of the funeral, and when the will was read and the few guests had departed, he pressed the priest to stay with him and go over the old house with him.

"I should like some one who knew my cousin in life to go through it with me," he said.

"With all my heart," the priest replied. "But why, when all is yours?"

"I don't know—it is a whim, a fancy, I suppose. To me there is something inexpressibly painful about touching for the first time the property of one who is dead. I should like to have you with me when I open all these old boxes and drawers."

"It is like opening a freshly-closed grave," Father Lemaitre said, with a sigh. "I shall miss my dear old friend very sadly, and my people will miss him, too," he added, with a sigh. "He did much good amongst them."

"You must let me add a mite to his legacy to your poor," Jasper said. "Part of the proceeds of the sale which I must have here shall be yours for their relief. I suppose it is quite certain that he was as poor as he said?"

"I feel sure of it. I don't think that any man with a nature like his could go out of the world with a lie upon his lips. No, Mr. Onslow, you will find nothing more than what we know of, depend upon it."

"I am quite satisfied," was the quiet answer. "Six months ago it was beyond my wildest hopes to come into a legacy like this. But there may be things in the house that will be useful to you—books, and so forth. We will search it through, if you can spare the time. You can help me to the market value of my new possessions, at any rate."

They went through the house together—Father Lemaitre had not very much to do—and they inspected boxes, chests, and cupboards, turning out many rare and curious things, by the way, that no one would ever have dreamed of finding in an out-of-the-way place like that. They came to no sign of money, however. Richard Onslow had evidently spoken the truth.

"Have we looked over everything?" Jasper Onslow asked, as they rested from their labors in the old-fashioned dining-room.

"There's a box in his bed-room," the priest replied. "I don't think you have opened that. It is where he kept his clothes."

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing that ever I remember. I have often seen him go to it."

"Then I think I had better turn it over to you for the benefit of some of your people. I don't suppose there was much in his wardrobe that would fit me."

"I don't suppose there was. I'll take the clothes thankfully; but we'll examine the box first. There may be some papers in it that we have not seen."

The box stood by the dead man's bed—a longish, flat, oaken box, with a rough lock fastening with a hasp.

"He never locked it," the priest said. "He kept nothing in it but clothes."

But to his surprise it was firmly locked, and the key was not there. Nor was it to be found anywhere, though they searched in every place they could think of, and tried every key in the house. None would open it, and they were obliged to prise it open with a hammer and chisel.

There was not much to reward their search. Neatly-folded suits of clothes of humble material, some of them much mended, a few letters and papers of no value, and nothing else, except an old leathern case and a small wooden box, about a foot square and four inches deep.

Father Lemaitre knew both articles well.

"I gave him that box," he said, "many years ago, and I have seen that case many a time. He used to keep memoranda of all sorts in it."

"There must be a great many in it now," Jasper said, carelessly; "it is almost bursting."

Bursting! Yes; but with no newspaper cuttings or memoranda, but with bank notes, so tightly folded that, as Jasper took them out, they fell apart, a very shower of paper wealth, and he could not count his possessions for bewildered amazement.

The little box was packed with jewels and precious stones, set and unset. Packets of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, and ornaments of various sorts and almost fabulous worth revealed themselves as he emptied the little box that had held them.

Jasper Onslow sat in the midst of his possessions, literally stupefied with his good fortune—the richest man in Languedoc at that moment—while the good priest's heart ached and his lips quivered with pain as he saw the money and the gems.

"He told a lie with his dying breath!" he murmured. "He could not trust me even after twenty years of friendship."

(*To be continued in our next.*)

THE THREE FATES.

BY ALICE A. LELAN.

My sister Theodora is fifteen years my senior, and as I am just seventeen, she is consequently thirty-two. Not long ago I had begun to despair of ever attaining that round in the ladder of my ambition whereon I should distinguish myself as bridesmaid at Theodora's wedding; but the ultimate results of Maria Jane's carelessness, Effie's mischief-making propensities, and Bridgetina's appalling mishap, remain to be seen; though to my prophetic eyes they are plainly perceptible; but I will not anticipate.

Some of our neighbors consider Miss Theodora Robbins as rather an odd sort of person—I suspect because she takes the liberty of entertaining a few ideas that extend a little beyond the same old orbit in which they swing round year after year. Then she paints pictures and sells them, instead of asking papa for money; and although papa is able to supply us liberally, he likes to see Theodora paint, and is very proud of her talent. She is also fond of studying all sorts of "ologies," and reading ponderous scientific works; so the people around think she has queer notions—though they are "free to confess that she does paint sweet pretty pictures." "Them roses do look mighty nat'ral," says old Mrs. Jones, peering through her glasses at Theodora's unfinished picture that stands on the easel in the bay window of the back parlor. Mrs. Jones has dropped in on her way to market "to see how the folks are getting along;" and finding our front door unfastened, which in this staid old country town is its normal condition, she has entered without ceremony, and commenced a tour of observation through the house, in search of the motherling, who is in the dining-room putting the china-closet to rights. In the course of her perambulations she has discovered Theodora's painting, which she contemplates for some time in silent admiration, and then remarks, "I don't suppose it takes you long, now, to do it, does it, Miss Robbins?" "Well," says Theo, with gentle leniency, "there is quite a good deal of work on it, and it takes some time." "If you wanted to, I suppose you could sell this—couldn't you?" queries Mrs. Jones. "Perhaps I might," says Theo. "if it were brought out a little more and finished up nicely; though I did not intend to sell this one." "What do you think you would ask for it if you were going to sell it?" puts in Mrs. Jones, apparently eager for a purchase. "I don't know," answered Theo. patiently; "an artist acquaintance of mine says there are some good points in the picture, and, if it were well finished, I might get fifty dollars for it." "Fifty dollars! Law sakes, you don't say so!" Poor Mrs. Jones is so overwhelmed by my sister's last remark that she hasn't another word left to say, but turns and looks up at Theo. with a wondering countenance, and an expression of dawning respect, slightly mingled with awe.

In such a Bohemian household as ours nothing ever seems to be done as it is in other domiciles; but since our last queen of the culinary dominions ascended the throne, the deeds that have been done in the kitchen have almost made us repent in sack-cloth and ashes. She, the queen, is large and angular, has a mighty scowl, speaks in a growl, and is almost as deep as an Egyptian mummy. There is only one thing that she does with any sort of diurnal regularity, and that is the demolishing of some article of crockeryware; she seems to take sudden partialities to certain pieces; lately, goblets have had a run of several days.

We begin to fear that Bridget has a slight predilection for the flowing bowl, and despite our vigilance she will occasionally indulge, as we have found her two or three times taking a siesta under the kitchen table, while Effie was going the rounds of the table licking the soiled dishes.

But what can we do? She is honest, puts on no airs, and is willing to work; so we conclude that it is better to bear the ills we have than fly to others we know not of. Before Bridget's arrival there was so long an interregnum that we welcomed her with tears of joy: for with our large family, and milk to be taken care of, and butter to be made, there is a deal of work to be gone through with every day.

Bridgetina (we bestow pet names upon her with grim derision) hath a daughter, a miniature of herself, aged ten, who waits at table with the gravity and decorum of a deacon. Maria Jane, however, resembles her maternal parent only in feature, for she is quite a sunny-tempered, merry-hearted little lassie. She has one apparently uncontrollable habit—that of carrying on a conversation with herself, in an undertone, generally relating to whatever work she may have in hand. It is labor lost to try to check her. "Yes'm," she ever replies with cheerful docility, and immediately takes up the broken thread of her discourse.

The latest acquisition to our household is a pretty little gray kitten. Effie is a marvel of mischievous machinations. There is no iniquity that she is not into, no shelf too high for her to reach, no corner too remote for her little pink nose to poke into. I never dare have my work-basket anywhere within range of her Argus eyes; she will instantly sidle up to it, assuming the most innocent and pre-occupied expression, and, forthwith proceed to remove its contents with the utmost celerity and dispatch, by clutching each article in her mouth and dropping it upon the carpet with the regularity of a machine, and with a quiet gravity as if it were a disagreeable duty that she wished to get through as quickly as possible. She delights in taking a nap in the middle of a basket of freshly ironed clothes, using my ruffled apron for a pillow. I went into the cellar one day and found her on a shelf, standing on her hind legs, lunching off a plump, picked chicken suspended from the ceiling.

Papa keeps *the* store of our village. It is a regular country store, but embraces a rather more extensive variety than is usually found in such places of traffic; for, besides a coal and lumber yard, a tailoring establishment flourishes in a new addition to the store proper. Our nominal dinner hour is twelve, but papa, instead of coming home at dinner time, as any reasonable mortal might be expected to do, is so overwhelmed with business, that he usually comes in any time between two o'clock and five; always with the same unruffled, beaming countenance, as if he thought keeping the dinner table standing all the afternoon was a laudable manner of creating a pleasing little variety in the domestic routine. Another eccentricity of my papa's is a habit he has of bringing some friend home with him to dinner; sometimes just as we have finished the meal, or wash-days, when we don't cook much, or some equally inopportune occasion.

One memorable Tuesday, a few weeks ago, it seemed as if everything persisted in going wrong all day. I had made up my mind to practice an hour in the morning. I have been forced to neglect my music of late, for with house-cleaning, and brother John and his family here on a visit from the West, I have hardly had a moment to myself. I had scarcely begun when mother called me to go to the store for some "spices and things" father had forgotten to send up—forgetfulness of household charges is one of father's characteristic peculiarities. I was anything but pleased with the proposition, and demanded, savagely, why Maria Jane or Bridget couldn't go. Mother's gentle voice floated reproachfully up the kitchen stairs: "Jane is peeling potatoes for dinner, and Bridget is ironing, and my pickles will be all spoiled if I wait much longer."

My conscience suddenly smote me, thinking of all the work and care the mother had to do and bear, and I flew off and performed my errand with alacrity; not even frowning upon papa for his inexcusable lack of thought. When I reached home I came upon a scene of disaster. Mother had sent Maria Jane into the parlor to bring out the empty coal-scuttle, and she, possessing a dim appreciation of the beautiful, had stopped to admire my tuberose, with its cluster of waxy bells, that stood on a stand in the bay window. By some incomprehensible legerdemain the miserable little wretch had managed to upset and knock it off the stand; and the fragrant white blossoms lay crushed and broken amidst the debris of lumps of earth and bits of pottery. I was speechless with wrath, with grief, with indignation.

"Where's Maria Jane?" I at last demanded. "She ought to be shaken and locked up,—I never heard of such arrant carelessness."

"I wouldn't say anything to her now if I were you, Jessie," interposed Theo. soothingly; "she didn't mean to do it; she feels very badly about it and has been crying ever since; and see," she added, kneeling on the floor and lifting up the poor, disabled stalk, "I don't believe the root is injured; perhaps it would grow again."

"Oh, yes," said I, snappishly; "its very well for you to be so forgiving, but I guess if it had been your flowers—"

"Look at Theodora's picture," interrupted mamma; "that is spoiled, too."

I turned around, and there, on the table, lay Theo's beautiful flower-piece that Mrs. Jones had admired so much, with a large, wet, dingy blot in the middle.

"The flower-pot fell against the easel," explained Theo, "and threw the picture down right on the wet earth."

"Why, Theo," I gasped, "it is ruined; but you—don't seem to care."

"Yes, I do care, very much," said she, and I detected a quiver in her voice. "It has cost me a great deal of time and study, and now it is all lost: or at least not lost," she added with quaint conscientiousness, "for I have learned something; but I will have it all to do again—"

"Well, there," I interrupted, "you're a saint on earth, Theo. but I'm not—I wish I was. Where's Bridget?—she might as well clear up this mess." And I marched off, up stairs, to have a good cry, and to brood over my unhappy lot, and the miseries and vexations I was called upon to endure.

I had just come to the conclusion that life was a dreary void, that I had nothing on earth to live for, that it wouldn't make the slightest difference to anybody if I were out of the way, and that if I could only die then and there it would be such a pleasant end to all my sorrows, when I heard a silvery ripple of notes from the piano, and then Theo's voice singing clearly—

"Be still, sad heart, and cease repining,
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."

I stepped out in the hall and sat down on the stairs to listen. Music has charms to soothe the savage breast, and as I was feeling particularly savage at the time, I suppose it had extra power. I am passionately fond of music, and after several years of hard practice, I am just beginning to feel that it is not a sacrilege for me to attempt to interpret the divine creations of the glorious old masters. But there is not a bit of "sing" in me; so I have always cherished a secret reverence and admiration for Theodora's sweet, true, though not very powerful voice, and ever listen with delight to her warblings. How, a few chords that she struck brought to my mind an air in the "Magic Flute," that lovely opera of Mozart's—Mozart the wonderful *maestro* of celestial harmonies! What a bright, brief, beautiful life was his! How I should like to have been one of the countless throng, that, for the first time, listened breathless, spell-bound, to the delicious, delicate, fairy-like strains of the "Magic Flute;" and as the thunders of applause burst forth, and the radiant young composer, standing before the curtain, bowed again and again his thanks, and as the *bravos* were caught up and re-echoed by the crowds that clustered about the doors, unable to gain admission, and shouts of "*Evviva el Maestrino!*"—"Long live the little master!"—rang from mouth to mouth,—what a moment of triumph for the young artist! So young, when he lay upon his death-bed and with his dying voice sang the "Requiem"—the last of his great works,—written at the mysterious request of an unknown friend, and performed, for the first time, over the casket that had contained its creator's wonderful soul.

I was in the midst of a drowsy day-dream when the sudden clash of the dinner-bell roused me broad awake, and I descended with a serene countenance, and—wonder of wonders—found the father home at dinner-time and seated at table. The blanc-mange I had made before breakfast had "set" beautifully; everybody said it was very nice, and even papa—who usually calls very dainty deserts, "stuff"—took a second saucer, and I began to think life's dreary void was filling up a little. So much are we creatures of circumstance! On such trifles light as air depend our content or discontent! I don't include Theo. and other philosophers in this remark—only ordinary mortals like myself.

Towards night, as I drew down the shades after a delicious draught of sunset, the fire in the grate shone so bright and clear it was a temptation too great, and seizing a book from the table, I dropped on the hearth-rug and proceeded to spoil my eyes with reckless disregard of the future. The book I held was "Dana's Household Book of Poetry"—that exhaustless treasure-house of all things dainty and sweet, and beautiful, and grand, and good. Turning over the leaves at random I lighted upon those rhythmical, soul-stirring lines of Campbell's:

"Of Nelson and the north
Sing the glorious days' renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the prince of all the land
Led them on."

As I read the last words I heard a crash in the hall. It sounded as if a basketful of glassware had tumbled from somewhere, and the result had been general destruction to its contents. I sprang up—it must be the hall lamp—the glass lantern had fallen, the little lamp inside had broken, I thought the oil had caught fire, the hall was in a blaze, the staircase would catch next, in a few minutes the whole house would be on fire—it would be impossible to save anything. Was there nothing I could snatch from the burning? I could not take the piano in my arms, nor the book-case: there was not a thing—yes, there was the pretty little painted coal-scuttle, with the picture of a turbaned Arab leading a stately, mild-eyed camel—I might catch that in one hand and a couple of Theo's newly-bound music-books in the other. The singularity and incongruity of the articles I was about to rescue from the devouring element did not strike me at the time. All this, like a flash through my mind, as I sprang up, flew to the door, and flung it open—darkness there and nothing more. The silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no token, and the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "meow-ow-ow!" in a pitiful, trembling wail from a distant corner, where, following the sound, I encountered two illuminated green glass marbles glaring at me in wild terror.

At this moment Theodora appeared, bearing a lamp in her hand, and a half-startled, inquiring expression in her dreamy eyes.

"Is anything the matter?" she asked.

"Oh, no," said I, "nothing—only Effie came near setting the house on fire." And light being thrown on the scene, I comprehended the situation at once. It was Bridgetina's duty to light the little lamp that was appropriated to the hall, and put it in the glass lantern that hung from the ceiling; but instead of doing her duty she had given the lamp to the care of Maria Jane, who, not being able to reach the lantern, had placed it upon the table, and left it there in blissful ignorance of the impending *catastrophe*. Effie, prowling about in search of adventure, observing the corner of the table-cover in tempting proximity to her nose, had caught it playfully in her claws, and brought down lamp and cover and all upon her devoted head. Some bits of the broken chimney lay scattered about, the cloth was lying in a crimson heap on the floor, but the lamp was nowhere visible. I carefully unbound the cover and from the midst thereof took out the lamp without a crack or a scratch.

"This seems to have been a day of disasters," said mamma, coming out of the dining-room closely followed by Maria Jane with a broom and dust-pan.

"Taint hurt nowhere, Miss Jessie," she exclaimed, raising the lamp cautiously with both hands, and examining it minutely.

"No," said I, severely; "but it might have been, Maria Jane—the lamp might have been broken, the oil might have taken fire, and we might all have been burned in our beds; so it is a lesson you should heed—never leave a lamp on the hall table again, Maria Jane."

"No m'am," said Maria Jane, staring at me rather blankly, but not even smiling at my flight of fancy; for the time of the casualty being seven o'clock in the evening, it would have been a physical impossibility for any of us to be burned in our beds.

"Of all glad words of tongue or pen, the gladdest are these: it might have been, but it was not," said Theo. as we entered the parlor.

"It is very well for you to make light of the accident, now that it is over and no harm done," I returned; "but perhaps you wouldn't have found it so pleasant if it had made light of itself." And with this abortive attempt at a brilliant rejoinder, I took possession of the corner of the sofa and resumed my book.

The next morning, while I was dusting the parlors and Theodora was arranging some pressed ferns and mosses in a rustic basket for the centre-table, we were suddenly startled by a stifled, agonized howl from Bridget, who was washing the oil-cloth in the front hall. We rushed to the rescue as quickly as possible and beheld our queen of the cuisine seated upon the floor beside a pail of suds, rocking to and fro and moaning spasmodically.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed Theo., hastening to her side.

"Och, sure, and look at that now," was all Bridget could say as she held up one hand from whence a stream of blood was running down her arm.

"Why, what is it? How did you do it?" asked Theo. "Haven't you anything to bind it up with? Here, take my handkerchief;" and she proceeded to twist a little white, hemstitched absurdity around Bridget's trembling fingers.

"Oh, dear me!" groaned she. "Bad luck to the lazy child,—if I had swept up the glass meself I shouldn't ha' got it in my hand."

"Was it a piece of the broken chimney?" said I; but Bridget answered never a word—she didn't hear me of course—grasping her pail in her other hand she shuffled off down stairs, alternately moaning with pain and berating her delinquent daughter.

"I will go up and tell mother; and she will give her something to put on it," said Theo.

So we both followed Bridget down to the kitchen and explained to mamma, who immediately examined the wound—it was quite a deep one, but there was no glass in it, mamma said—and then bound it up with great care and gentleness; but Bridgetina was used up for that day, and fretted so over her work, and made so many exclamations over her sore hand, that at last mother sent her off up stairs to bed.

There was a good-sized basket of clothes waiting to be ironed, a pan full of pears that must be peeled and stewed for tea, and dinner to cook besides.

"Dora, I think you and Jessie will have to do the pears,—Jane can help you," said mamma. "I must iron these shirts, and then you can both iron your collars and cuffs while I see about dinner."

So we went to work with a will; but the faster we worked the faster the pompous little wooden clock on the mantle ticked out the minutes, giving a kind of gurgling chuckle just before striking the hour—as if inwardly laughing at our futile efforts to get ahead of time—and then hurrying on again faster than ever, it seemed. It was eleven o'clock almost before we knew it, and mamma said, "never mind about dinner—there was some cold ham and pumpkin pie; we could get along for one day without cooking, and then we would have time to finish the ironing and get all the work done before dinner." And so we did: not having Bridgetina around to hinder! we finished up everything with neatness and dispatch.

Of course father did not come home to dinner, and mamma had worked so indefatigably that she was wearied out, and said she couldn't eat anything; but we made her take some toast and tea, and then Theo. ordered her up stairs to take a nap and get rested—went with her to see that her orders were obeyed, shook up the pillows, darkened the room, gave her some camphor for refreshment, and commanding her to go to sleep and stay asleep all the afternoon, shut the door and came down stairs. We covered the dishes and left the table standing for father.

"And now, Theo," said I, executing a *deux-temps* with papa's gold-headed cane for a partner, which I was about to set away in a secret corner of the dining-room closet where we consigned it every night in the fear of burglars—a quite unnecessary precaution, for there are so few things in our house that a burglar would even deign to cast an eye upon, that I hardly think one could be coaxed into an attempt to break in—"now we will have a good long afternoon all to ourselves. You can work on your lilies and I am going to practice 'The Last Rose of Summer.'" This "Last Rose" had, for me, so many thorns I found it very hard to manipulate. Theo. settled herself in the bay-window with her easel and paint-box and was soon lost to the world in a dream of shaded lily-leaves and a groping after the undiscovered tint requisite for a cluster of lilies beyond lilies. I seated myself at the piano and ran over some of my old exercises, and practised runs and trills with a prodigal use of time, in the full faith that I had before me three or four good long hours. But, alas, for the frailty of human hopes! The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft aglee.

I had been playing not much more than half an hour, when on trying a new piece that was rather closely printed, I discovered there was not enough light in the room, and going to the west window I rolled the shade up higher; as I did so, happening to glance out across the yard to the street, I saw the familiar form of my paternal parent ascending the hill and hastening homeward under the maples that were dropping the last of their autumn splendors into the path below. But who is this that walketh beside him with proud and princely mien, in the very new and fashionable coat, the very shiny beaver, and,—yes—actually,—kid gloves (of which I catch a glimpse as he raises a shapely hand with an emphatic gesture enforcing some remark he is making to papa). Who could it be? Evidently a stranger—evidently also an inhabitant of the metropolis—the masculine portion of our community did not often indulge in broadcloth and kid gloves on weekdays. I wondered, in an uninterested sort of way, how he came to be with papa, and where he was going. The full horrors of the situation did not even dawn upon me until papa opened the front gate, and scarcely believing my eyes, I beheld the stranger walk in beside him with the most matter-of-course and at-home air possible; *then* they overwhelmed me like a flood, and I skimmed across the parlor, pounced upon Theodora in the bay-window and snatched her paint brush out of her hand the better to secure her attention.

"Theodora," I gasped, in a quaking whisper, "father is coming home with a—a—strange gentleman! He is bringing him here to—to—dinner!" And I dropped into a chair and gazed wildly at my bewildered sister.

"Why, Jessie—who?—are you sure?—where are they?" said Theo. incoherently. "It can't be—perhaps it is only some one come on an errand." A gleam of hope lighting her eyes.

"No," said I, instantly quenching the forlorn hope; "it is a New Yorker—some one of papa's innumerable business acquaintances, I suppose. He has come up on business, and papa has invited him up to dinner. Just like him, exactly. But, good gracious, they will be in here in a minute. Come out quick!" And I swooped down upon my dazed sister and dragged her out, across the hall, and into the dining-room just as papa entered the front door.

They went into the parlor and the next minute we heard papa coming towards our retreat. Theo. and I awaited him in grim silence. He swung the door wide open in his usual lawless fashion, and I closed it carefully behind him, not wishing to include the unknown in our conference.

"Where's your mother, girls?" demanded papa, cheerfully.

"Gone to bed with a sick headache," answered Theo. sweetly.

"Why, I'm sorry; that's too bad. Mr. Seymour came up to-day on business and I thought he might as well come home with me and take some dinner."

"Yes, but there is no dinner to take," said I, crushingly.

"Bridget retired to her room, this morning, with a sore hand; so we didn't cook any dinner and there is nothing in the house but a piece of beef that isn't roasted and a pair of chickens with the feathers on."

"Well, well, well," said papa; taken all aback, as it were, by the state of affairs, and looking somewhat puzzled.

"It's anything but *well*, I should think," said I, *soto voce*.

"But girls you'll have to get up something; because I've asked the man to dinner and it won't do to tell him there isn't anything to eat," argued papa. "Give us a cup of tea, a piece of pie and some cold meat—that will do. You can send Jane in when its ready." And papa stalked back to the parlor and left us to bear the burden and heat of the day.

"A piece of pie and some cold meat," I repeated, scornfully. "There was barely half a small pie left after dinner, and there is a bone with a little ham on it. Put on your thinking cap, Theo., quick,—what shall we do?"

"Jessie," said she, after a moment's cogitation, with sudden cheer in her voice, "you can make an omelet;—you know you make splendid omelets. We can take the ham that's left and Jane can chop it up for you—"

"Theo.," I interposed, "the question is, will the coming man *eat* omelet?"

"We'll take it for granted that he does," said she; "if he don't, so much the worse for him. There are those nice pickles mamma made, we might have some of those; and I'm sure there's enough pie for two people."

"Yes," said I, "and now I remember there is a dish of baked-beans in the cellar that was left yesterday—gentlemen always like baked beans—we can warm them and they will be very nice; and I might open a can of those delicious white peaches mamma put up," I added, with reckless extravagance.

"Yes, do," said Theo., "and I will make some chocolate; I think there is some in the

china-closet—perhaps he might not care for tea."

"That reminds me," said I, inspired by the exigencies of the occasion—"there is a box of sardines on the top shelf, that papa brought home the other day; we'll have those."

"And there's a lemon in the side-board," said Theo. "I put it there myself, after I found that Maria Jane was privately extracting the juice from some that were left in the closet—I'll cut it up for the sardines."

"We'll have a dinner for a king," I exclaimed, as we hastened down to the kitchen to begin operations.

In an incredibly short space of time the banquet was set out in gorgeous array. The omelet was an exquisite brown and as light as sponge-cake. The chocolate poured out smooth and creamy.

"Now, Theo.," said I, while Maria Jane was placing the chairs at table, "you will have to sit in mamma's place and pour the tea and chocolate."

"I?" exclaimed Theo., with a start of dismay.

"Yes, you," said I, calmly—"why not? I don't think we ought to disturb mother, she is probably asleep, and you know she looked really tired out at dinner-time."

"But you, Jessie—"

"Mercy, Theodora, how can you?" I interrupted. "I look like a fright. My face is as red as a beet standing over that hot stove, and my brain has been in such a state of excitement and surprise about that omelet that my hair is all coming down. Now you can just take off this long apron, your hair is all nice and smooth—that braid over the top is very becoming," I added, with insinuating cajolery. "Let me arrange your neck-ribbon a little—there, now you look lovely?" And I gave her a kiss on one cheek and poked her into the seat behind the tea-urn.

"Well, if I must, I suppose I must," said Theo. resignedly; "but I wish he were in some foreign land—you'd find a change in me? What are you standing there staring at, Maria Jane?—and everything getting cold. Go and call them to dinner this minute!" she added, with sudden ferocity quite unusual in the gentle Theo.

I scampered down stairs into the kitchen, but with design aforethought, leaving the door at the head of the stairs a tiny bit open; for I had suddenly and privately found the intention of sitting on a step and trying to discover from his voice and conversation what manner of man it might be. I was not at all curious, of course, but since I could not appear at table I thought I might as well avail myself of this excellent opportunity of enjoying the benefit of the table talk!

Although this was the first time "Mr. Seymour" had ever darkened our doors, I had often heard papa speak of him and of the firm, "Seymour & Clayton," wholesale merchants of New York, with whom he had traded for a number of years. This Mr. Seymour was the nephew of the senior member of the firm who had retired from business some time before, leaving his place to his nephew. Papa's opinion of him was concisely expressed in the words, "a smart fellow," and I gathered from various remarks that he was about thirty-five or six years of age.

I waited until papa had had time to go through the introduction and they were seated at table, then I stepped up on the stairs and sat down.

"I am very sorry, Miss Robbins," Mr. Seymour was saying, in a pleasant, well modulated voice, "that I have encroached upon your hospitality at this time of day. When your father invited me to dine with him I supposed this to be your usual dinner-hour."

"It doesn't make the slightest difference," said Theodora, sweetly.

("Oh shade of truth! what a monstrous prevarication," thought I).

"Papa, give Mr. Seymour another piece of omelet."

"Thank you," said Mr. S.—apparently—accepting—"I never knew before that omelets could be made so delicious."

(I gave a little noiseless whistle. "Lucky thought of Theo.'s—that omelet," said I to myself).

"I took the liberty of looking at your painting, Miss Robbins," said Mr. S. "Do you know that you have produced a remarkably fine effect for water-colors. Some of the colors are as rich as oil."

("Bosh!" said I, to the same auditor as before. "I wonder if Theodora will swallow all that. He only says it for something to say." The burned finger that I had acquired in the process of cooking the omelet, was smarting vindictively just then, provoking in me anything but friendly feelings towards the primeval cause thereof.

"I have never tried oil-colors," said Theo., coolly passing by the compliment, "but I think I shall attempt them after I have finished two or three sketches that I have on hand. I suppose you have seen Mr. Ultramarine's last sea-view—have you not, Mr. Seymour?"

At this moment I imagined I heard a slight movement in the dining-room as if the chairs were being pushed back. The stair-door had swung open of itself nearly half way, and in leaving the room they could see me plainly. I sprang up noiselessly and attempted to descend, but in my haste my foot caught in my dress, I caught the knob of the kitchen door to save myself from falling, brought it to with a rebounding bang, and found myself doubled up and squeezed in between the door and the step so tight that I could only release myself after I had extricated one hand and opened the door; when I dropped softly into the kitchen and sat there, on the floor, rubbing my rasped elbow with tears in my eyes and wanting to scream with laughter over the absurdity of my acrobatic performances. I listened, but heard only a gentle rattle of cups and saucers and clicking of knives and forks. I had just made up my mind that it was a false alarm when there was a decided movement above stairs; I heard papa wheel his arm-chair back, then the sound of footsteps retreating towards the parlor. When it was all quiet along the Potomac, I ascended and found the banquet-hall deserted by all save Maria Jane, who was standing at the foot of the table, balancing a small oval waiter on her head, and soliloquizing over a golden shred of omelet left in the dish, for manners, I suppose.

I thought of course Mr. S. would be making his adieux very soon and returning to the store with papa from whence he would go to the depot and take the half-past four train down. At least I had noticed that that was the routine generally observed by papa's transient visitors. So, with the aid of our small servant, having restored the dining-room to its pristine repose and splendor, I divested myself of my voluminous calico apron, went to my room, re-arranged my dishevelled tresses, put some cold-cream on my scorched finger and returned to the dining-room. It was a quarter past four by the clock.

"Well," thought I, "this is allowing short time to catch the next train." At this moment I heard steps in the hall and the opening and closing of doors: whereupon to make sure, I went to the front window and looked out. Papa was just shutting the gate behind him, but either Mr. Seymour had rendered himself invisible or else papa had left him in the house.

"This is passing strange," I remarked to myself. "I wonder what's a brewing now? It's too late for the train, but why didn't he go down to the store with father? May be he is a robber in disguise—perhaps I had better count the spoons. What can he be staying all this time for? Perhaps it's Mr. Martin (a rejected suitor of Theo.'s), in the guise of Mr. S. May be he has poisoned Theodora out of revenge, and got out through the hay-window and run away. There isn't a book nor a paper to amuse one with," said I to myself, wandering aimlessly around the room. "Any other time all the dailies and weeklies for a month back would be piled up on the side-board. Here I might have been practising all this afternoon; and to-morrow I shall have no time—that horrid sewing-society meets here on Friday and I shall have to help mother make cake. It's always the way. I wish I were a man and then I could say 'confound it,' or something else." And I flung myself into a chair and kicked over a footstool. For which undignified behaviour I shall offer no apology: it was a great relief to my feelings, as, for the time being, I endowed the footstool with the personality of Mr. S.

A sound of wheels and the tramping of horses' feet fell upon my ear and I turned indifferently to look out of the window. Jimmy (our factotum) was just stopping at the gate with our old gray horse and buggy. The front door opened and closed, Mr. Seymour walked down the path, out the gate and into the wagon; Jimmy followed, took the reins, and they rattled off, down the hill, and out of sight. I dashed into the parlor and confronted my serene sister.

"Well, Miss Theodora Robbins," I began, in frigid tones, "I think you'd better give an account of yourself. These are pretty proceedings—entertaining a strange gentleman you never saw before a whole half-hour in a room all alone by yourself!" In my virtuous indignation I did not pause to consider the Hibernian turn of my expressions.

"Yes," said Theodora, with perfect serenity; "we went so deep into pictures and painting that before we were aware it was too late for the train, so papa said he would send Jimmy up with the buggy and he could take Mr. Seymour to the bridge, where he might get on the five o'clock express. But what did you leave me all alone for, Jessie—why didn't you come in?"

As the possibility of my entering the parlor while our visitor was there had never suggested itself to me before, and as I saw no reason why I should not have taken this simple and perfectly justifiable method of passing the time of probation, I concluded it best to ignore my sister's last remark entirely, and hastened to say, "He must have been extremely deep in painting—quite smothered in paint, I should think, to become so oblivious to time and trains. Pray, can you not give me a synopsis of his highly interesting, amusing and instructive conversation? I'll wager he doesn't know a word about painting. Didn't he say what he most admired was 'that broad-er-a-er-a,' and the general tone of the picture, and the blending of light and shade, etc., etc.? Anybody could say that."

Theodora was standing, with her head on one side, critically viewing a half-finished lily.

"I believe that would have a better effect, as Mr. Seymour says," she remarked, musingly, "Just look, Jessie, at this cluster of pansies he sketched in my scrap-book. He really has a good deal of artistic taste and talent: he gave me some hints—quite incidentally—that I shall remember and profit by."

I saw that words would be wasted—even the comprehensive look I bestowed upon my unconscious, and exasperatingly preoccupied sister, was quite lost, so, whirling myself round on the piano-stool, I rushed into a "Runaway Gallop," which roused up Beauty, my pet canary, who was meditating on his perch, and who, fired with the spirit of competition, instantly accepted the challenge and started off with a ringing roulade that rose high and clear and sweet above all my runs and trills; and when I was obliged to stop for laughing to see him shaking all over with the energy of his execution, he thinking he had gained the day, began a triumphant and prolonged shake, but stopped in the middle, with great abruptness, shut his eyes up tight and went fast asleep in an instant, as stiff and still and silent as if he had never dreamed of a note of music in his life.

Two days after this Theodora received a package by express. It was a square package, neatly wrapped in thick brown paper—it looked as if it might be a box.

"What is it, Theo.?" I asked, turning it around and over and upside down, and examining it on all sides.

"I don't know, I am sure," said Theo., regarding it doubtfully. "I can't think of any one who would be likely to send me anything."

"Suppose we open it," said I, brilliantly.

"Why, yes," said she, with sudden interest; as if this simple and natural manner of solving the problem had just occurred to her.

I cut the twine, which was fastened around the bundle, with alacrity and a pair of scissors, and had the wrapping off in a trice; when were revealed two prettily bound books, and on the top one was a little note, addressed, in a decidedly masculine chirography, to—"Miss Robbins."

"Ho!" cried I, "the plot thickens! What is this I see before me?" And Theodora, taking the note between her thumb and finger, gazed at it silently.

"Show me the monster's name, instantly," I demanded, pointing the scissors at her. She unfolded the paper and turned to the signature—"Frederick H. Seymour." I gave a little scream and pretended to faint on Theodora's shoulder.

"He hopes I will excuse the liberty he takes," said she, glancing over the note, "but thought perhaps I might find a few hints in the volume on colors." "Care on Colors," said I, parenthetically, reading the title from the cover of the smaller book.

"Well—I suppose—I ought to be very much obliged to him," said Theo., rather dubiously. "I now remember he spoke of these very books when he was here, and I innocently and truthfully answered that I had not read them. I think—like an unsuspicious idiot—I even went so far as to say that I intended to get them. I dare say he thinks I was hinting for them."

Here, meeting my enquiring look, she burst into a little laugh. "It is rather odd—isn't it Jessie? I am sure I never imagined—" her laughter suddenly changed to an expression of profound gravity, blended with dismay—"I shall have to acknowledge his gift? I suppose I must write a note of thanks?" (interrogatively, as if hoping I might suggest some other mode of egress from the dilemma.)

"Yes, of course," said I, decisively; "and it really seems to me, Miss Robbins," but at this moment mamma called me in great haste, Effie was galloping around the dining-room with the sleeves of my new white waist that I had been tucking and had left on the sewing-machine, in consequence of which interruption the wit and wisdom of the remark I was about to make, were lost to the world forever.

One morning, towards the latter part of the next week, it being remarkably mild and sunny for November, I took possession of the horse and wagon and, with Jimmy as driver, set out to make a call on a friend and schoolmate of mine residing in the next town about four miles distant. My friend received me with open arms and Jimmy went back without me. I spent the day as I usually do when I get within those hospitable gates, and it was not until the king of day was wrapping the drapery of his couch about him that our charioteer reined in his prancing steed before my friend's door, and I drove home "in the glory of the sunset, in the purple mist of evening." It was so very misty, in fact, that I was chilled through by the time I reached the parental roof-tree and hurried into the parlor to thaw myself. While I was still stamping my benumbed toes the door opened, Theodora entered, crossed the room and seated herself upon an ottoman beside the fire.

"Jessie, who do you suppose has been here to-day?" (rather abruptly but quite tranquilly).

"Why, I don't know—who?" said I, indifferently, struggling with a refractory hook and eye on my cloak.

"Mr. Seymour!" Theodora discharged this shot at me without so much as a glance of warning. I stared at her blankly, for a minute. "Mr. Seymour? What did he come for?"

"Oh, about some mistake he had made in the goods papa ordered. He came up on the noon train, and of course papa had to ask him up to dinner," said Theo., with an air the most lamb-like in its guilelessness.

"Then he went back early, I suppose," said I, in a taking-it-for-granted tone.

"N—no," said Theodora, apparently somewhat disconcerted; "he talked so much he forgot about the time, I think, and he waited till the five o'clock train."

I looked at Theo.; she was gazing abstractedly into the fire, the ruddy light gilding the broad braid that, like a diadem, crowned my sister's stately head.

"Came up—to see papa—on business—and stayed here till five o'clock," said I, slowly; and then went off into a convulsive fit of laughter during which I rocked violently in my chair in an ecstasy of mirth.

When, after a little, I recovered sufficiently to be able to wipe the tears from my eyes, I looked around for Theodora, but the ottoman was vacant and she had vanished.

Not long after this came a letter to "Miss Robbins"—obviously addressed by the same "bold determined hand" whose calligraphy adorned the first venture before mentioned. After this arrived another of the same species, and after this another, until one day I came upon Theodora standing at the foot of the stairs with an open letter in her hand.

"Jessie," said she, as I drew near, in so odd a tone that I looked at her with some curiosity.

"What—another love-letter? Oh, Theodora."

"Jessie," she repeated, so gravely that I began to be startled, "What do you think Mr. Seymour has done?"

"Don't tell me that he has gone and committed suicide and then written to tell you about it," said I, clasping my hands and trying to look horror-stricken.

"He has asked me to marry him," said Theodora, quietly.

"What?" I exclaimed, with numberless exclamation points and endeavoring to appear very much surprised, but not succeeding very well as a suspicion had crossed my mind the first moment she spoke. "Did anybody ever hear of such impertinence. Of course you would never think of marrying such an ordinary, uninteresting, commonplace—"

"Why Jessie Robbins!" began Theodora, indignantly; then catching me laughing, the color flushed into her cheeks even to the smooth fair brow, and dropping her eyes, she crumpled the letter in her hand.

I winked at an imaginary familiar and then—"Well, Theo," said I, "you see if it hadn't been for the three fates all this would never have happened."

"The three fates?" said Theodora.—"What are you talking about?"

"About Bridgetina, Maria Jane and Elfie, of course. Aren't they the fates in this little episode? If Maria Jane hadn't put the lamp on the hall table, if Elfie hadn't pulled it off, or if Bridget hadn't wounded herself with the broken glass, mamma wouldn't have worked herself sick, you would not have presided at table, and Mr. Seymour would have come and gone in entire ignorance of the treasure of beauty, intellect, talent, and"——

Theodora made a grab at me, but I eluded it and she caught only the end of my apron-string, which untied itself and I left the apron in her grasp and flew up the stairs, throwing her a kiss as I gained the topmost step.

What I ponder over a good deal and what strikes me as rather singular, to say the least, is that I have never seen the "fated Fairy Prince," save and except a dim and distant view of his graceful figure on that memorable afternoon when he came up the hill, under the maples, with papa; and afterwards the merest glimpse of his hyacinthine locks as he passed out the gate. I have my doubts if I ever shall see him. I begin to think there is a fate in it. I forgot to mention that he was here again a short time ago, and, as a matter of course, in the natural order of things, I was not at home, being in the city for a few days' visit.

My opinion is that he is a myth; and I have finally arrived at the firm conviction that on that solemn occasion—as yet afar off in the uncertain future—when I shall stand beside Theodora—Theodora in a halo of misty lace, glistening silk, and trailing sprays of orange blossoms: the irrevocable words having been pronounced, I shall, in the space of a second, catch just a fleeting glimpse of the radiant bridegroom's kingly brow and lovelit eyes, when he will snatch my white-robed sister from my arms, and bearing her to the church door, where will stand a "winged steed with mane of gold," pawing the ground with ringing hoofs and tossing his glittering locks in the merry wind and dancing sunshine, he will leap into the saddle; then light to the croup the fair lady he'll swing, and like a flash—in the twinkling of an eye and a cloud of dust, they will vanish from my dazzled gaze forevermore.

AN ADVENTURE IN THE PHILLIPPINES.

BY A MERCHANT CAPTAIN.

Without any unnecessary preface I will at once proceed to inform my readers that on the occasion of a return voyage from China, in the good ship Winthrop, I took in part of a cargo of tea at Canton, and then slipped down to the Phillippine Islands to fill up with dried fruit and spices. We cast our anchor in the harbor of Manilla; but the articles we wanted were not delivered as I desired. There was much delay occasioned by some trouble with the Chinese porters; so that we were two weeks in accomplishing what might have been done in four days. One day, while we were thus delayed, I went on shore with my rifle, and took a horse for a turn in the country. I went alone, but not from choice. My officers had an engagement with the officers of another English ship, which they did not like to break; and I did not urge them to do so. Still, it was not unpleasant to ride alone, for sometimes I love to be by myself, where I can think and commune as I please.

On the present occasion I took a road that led to the eastward, towards the rice lands, and as the scenery was attractive, I cantered on until I was far away from the city and its surroundings. I had ridden, I should judge, fifteen miles, without seeing anything worth shooting, and was beginning to think that I should carry back the same bullet in my rifle which I had put in before I left the ship, when I heard a flapping close by me upon my right, and upon looking in that direction, I saw an enormous heron fly up from a rice-bed, and steer away to the southward. I had heard of those birds—I had heard that they had been captured measuring over six feet in height,—and if I had doubted the statement before, I did not doubt it after I saw that fellow rise. I wanted him very much, and I was determined to have him if the thing were within bounds of possibility. I might, had I been prepared, have taken him on the wing, but before I could get my rifle into position he was too far away. I watched him, and saw him settle down behind some trees, about half a mile off, and after a little hunting I found a path leading that way, which seemed to be firm enough to give safe passage to my horse. You will understand that the district of these rice-fields is low and marshy.

The path I had taken led through a thicket of small palms, and at length I came out upon the shore of a broad lake or lagoon, which looked like some of the dismal swamps of Florida. I saw my monster heron upon an island, some two hundred yards distant, and I determined to fire at him, whether I got him or not. For this purpose, I dismounted, and hitched my horse to a tree, and then sought a place where I could find a good rest for my rifle. While I was thus engaged, I discovered a small boat made fast among some tall reeds not more than ten rods off; and, as this gave me opportunity to reach the island, I made up my mind to be more particular in my aim. I found a good rest, and, in a very few moments more, the bird tumbled over with a bullet through its breast. I then hastened to the boat, which I found to be a sort of raft-like gondola, almost as broad as it was long, furnished with a good paddle, and only fastened by a manilla rope.

It cost some little effort to get the thing into the water; but I succeeded, after a while, and was soon on my way to the island, which I reached without further difficulty. I drove the boat up on the surface of the soft mud, and leaped ashore, sinking in to the knees where I had expected to find firm footing. But I did not mind this. I scrambled on, and was soon upon a better foundation. I found my bird dead; and when I beheld his proportions, and thought what a valuable addition his stuffed skin would make my museum, I forgot the labor and the mud. I was stooping to turn my prize over, when I fancied that I heard something moving behind me, and, upon looking around, I saw my boat swinging away from the shore. As quickly as possible, I leaped towards the water's edge; but, before I could reach the boat, I was up to my middle in the soft mud. I stretched forth my hands, and made one desperate effort to seize the departing craft. But I failed to touch it, and sank deeper into the mud: and there I stood, almost to my armpits in the slough, and saw my boat float lazily off, hopelessly beyond my reach.

A happy thought dawned upon me. I would get up out of the mud, and undress myself, and swim for my boat. I could leap far enough out to strike clear water. But we can't always do as we would; and oftentimes man's most promising plans are knocked on the head by circumstances beyond his control. I had just perfected the swimming plan in my mind, and was struggling to free myself from the mud, when something appeared to me that caused me to hasten my movements in a most extraordinary manner. This accelerating presence was nothing more or less than an enormous crocodile. The ugly monster lay with his head towards me, eyeing me sharply, and evidently calculating how large a morsel I would make. And he it was, probably, that had disturbed the boat. The instinct of self-preservation gave me strength, and while I struggled up, and back, I plashed with my hands, and yelled with my lungs, making all the noise and commotion I could. The fellow did not attack me, and I finally succeeded in reaching firm ground, where I sat down to rest, for the effort of extricating myself from that sticky soap had used up the last atom of my strength.

When I gained strength enough to enable me to stand without an effort, I got up and looked about me. My position was surely not an enviable one. The island, of which I was at that moment lord and master, was not more than six rods long, by about four broad, and was covered with reeds. There was a clump of low water-bushes upon one side, but there was no such thing as a tree upon it. There I was, in possession of the dead heron, and I felt that I had most emphatically caught a Tartar. The boat was drifting away, before a gentle breeze, towards that part of the shore from which I had come, and for me to swim to it was out of the question.

The crocodile had disappeared; but I knew that he would very quickly find me if I ventured into the water. I stood there, contemplating the scene, until the boat had drifted upon the distant shore, and then I sat down again. My only hope of escape was that some one might come to the lake in search of me. But what if no man came? But what if those who sought me did not find this sunken hole? The thought was a most unpleasant one. I was thus engaged when I noticed that my horse was uneasy. Something had frightened him. At length he gave a heavy pull, and freed himself from his fastenings, and in a few seconds more, I had seen the last of him.

I had sat there half an hour or more, and the sun was sinking so low that the shadows fell entirely across the lake, when I observed a commotion in the water before me, and presently two large crocodiles made their appearance, looking very hungry, and betraying an evident desire to eat me up. I seized my rifle and fired at the one nearest me, upon which they quickly disappeared. The sun went down, and the last gleam of daylight faded away. I sat beside my dead heron, but dared not go to sleep. When I felt the drowsy spirit coming upon me, I started up and paced to and fro across the narrow island. But this could not be kept up. Towards midnight I sat beside my bird, my head sunk upon its soft, feathery breast, and I was asleep before I knew it. I do not think I slept long, however. Something oppressed me, and I awoke with a suffocating sensation, to find my nostils inhaling a strong, sickening odor. The moon had risen, and by its light I saw an enormous crocodile, with its horrible jaws not six feet from me. To cock a pistol and flatten a ball against his armour was but the work of a moment; and as I leaped to my feet, with my rifle in my hand, the fellow turned and scrambled for the water.

I slept no more that night, and no more crocodiles visited me. When daylight came again, I began to consider anew the chances of my being found by my friends. If they inquired of me at Manilla they would certainly learn which road I had taken from the city; and if they followed that road as far as I had come, they might discover, by the tracks of my horse, where I had turned off. Another thing, too, I considered favorable. They would go to the inn where I had hired the horse, and they would find that the animal had come home without me. This would certainly lead them quickly to search for me. My first impulse upon finding the daylight upon me, was to fire some signal guns; but upon reflection I concluded I had better wait until my people could have had time to come out from the city, for I had not powder enough to load many times.

I waited until the sun had been up two hours, and then I discharged my rifle. I was hungry and faint, and the dampness of the night had helped to waste my strength. By-and-by I fired again, putting in as much powder as I thought would burn profitably. I had fired thus, at intervals of about ten minutes, until I had but one charge left, and I was beginning to calculate anew upon my chances, and to think of what would be the result if I was not found, when a most welcome sight broke upon my vision. I saw some of my men coming down towards the lake. I fired my last charge, and as they gained a knowledge of my whereabouts, they hastened on, and were soon at the water's edge. I made them understand where the boat was; and when they had found it, and I knew that I was safe, I sank down, and was fairly asleep when they reached me.

My friends had followed me just as I anticipated. They had found my horse at the inn, and having learned the direction I had taken, they set forth. They might not, however, have discovered the place where I had turned off from the road, had they not heard the report of my rifle. I got back to my ship with a whole skin, where a small quantity of brandy, and a very generous quantity of nourishing food, soon restored me to myself.

WORTH WINNING.

BY DONALD DARROCK.

A neat little room it was in which Mr. and Mrs. Ellerton sat at breakfast. The fire burned brightly in the grate; the mellow sunlight, penetrating the heavy crimson curtains, cast a warm, shadowy gleam throughout the parlor. Everything wore a cheerful aspect, except the two faces at the table. The husband was a stern-looking man, with a dark frown on his otherwise handsome brow; the wife, a pale, delicate woman, with traces of former beauty on her careworn face. She looked as if that which she craved was denied her—the fond smile, the affectionate caress of other days. Who, to see her, would think that five years before she was a happy, trusting bride, who thought that in the future there would be nothing but sunshine for her?

But let us listen to their conversation, and we shall be better able to judge of the nature of the occupants of the room.

"Clara, this coffee is dreadful. Instead of acting as a stimulant, it would serve as an emetic to a weak stomach."

"Well, my dear, I really can't help it. I am sorry you do not relish it."

"I could tolerate it for once, but it is the same every day. You could remedy it by rising half an hour earlier every morning, and superintending the preparation of breakfast, instead of leaving it to the care of a servant."

"I know, George, I overslept myself this morning; but I don't think I deserve censure, for it does not often happen. And the children were so very restless last night. I don't think that Lily is quite well."

This was spoken in a faltering voice, as if the overcharged heart was bruised and bleeding under the thoughtless remarks of the idolized husband.

"Always some excuse for ill-prepared food! You women can find a paltry excuse for everything. But I assure you, Mrs. Ellerton, no apology is needed."

This was uttered in a sneering tone, with a touch of sarcasm.

"Oh, don't, George! You know not what pain it causes me to hear you speak in this manner! You know I am as thoughtful of your happiness as my many cares and delicate health will admit."

"Many cares, indeed!"

This last cutting remark was more than the poor wife could bear; so she gave vent to her pent-up feelings in a flood of tears.

"Tears! Oh, well, that is quite enough to drive me from home."

So saying, he took his hat and left the apartment. Passing from the house, something impelled him to turn back and console his weeping wife, the partner of his bosom, the sharer of his joys and sorrows. But, no—his pride forbade it; he could not so humble himself.

"Oh, pshaw!" he thought. "Why should I let a woman's tears annoy me thus? 'Tis only a fit of weeping."

Ah, George Ellerton, do you remember that bright May morning, over five years ago, and the beautiful young being that leant so confidingly upon your arm? She placed her happiness in your keeping, and you should guard it well. But a voice asks, "Have you done so? What were the vows you took upon you? Should they not be considered sacred? Ah, you have well-nigh wrecked the happiness of the one you promised to love, honor, and cherish!"

"Perhaps I'm a little rough and ill-natured sometimes, but I think I am partly excusable, for I am so harassed by business cares and perplexities."

"No excuse, Mr. Ellerton," the voice whispers. "Your wife is a frail, tender woman, who should be nurtured and cared for to the utmost of your power; you, a strong, brawny man, who, as her cares increase, should try to lessen, instead of adding to, her burdens."

"I'll be hanged if I ain't a cross brute!" he ejaculated, half-aloud.

With these reflections still chasing each other through his mind, he proceeded to his place of business. But he seemed ill at ease, and started at an early hour homeward.

We will step into the young wife's private chamber, and see what she has been doing in her husband's absence. After his sudden exit, she arose and went to her room, and there, kneeling, offered up a prayer to Heaven, imploring aid in her great trials, with fortitude to bear them and to perform her duty under all circumstances.

In the meantime, she, too, is thinking of their happy bridal, and her bright hopes of the future. A joyous light beams in her eye, and a smile wreathes her lips as she says, "Ah, I was happy—oh, so happy! My life seemed all unclouded as a summer day. My hopes were too bright to be lasting. My kind, loving, indulgent husband! He never caresses me now, nor allows me to lavish any wealth of affection on him. There is such an aching void here!" pressing her hand to her heart.

As she spoke these last words, her lip quivered and her brow contracted.

"Perhaps it is my fault. I'll try to win back my husband's love and affection."

So saying, she sprang from her chair and went to the mirror.

"How five years' time," said she, "tells on my delicate frame!"

Her husband's neglect had made her careless of her personal appearance; so, unwinding her glossy brown hair, she exclaimed, "The same he used to admire so much! Now I will dress my hair the way he always liked to see it."

Her hazel eyes sparkled with a new light; and with more energy than she had shown for years, she went on preparing her toilette, donning a blue merino dress (blue was his favorite color) and tiny white collar and cuffs. Then she took another glance in the mirror, and, with a burst of enthusiasm, exclaimed, "I look almost like myself again! I will win his love back yet, for it is worth winning; I never knew how to appreciate it until now. I will win it back—Heaven helping me, I will!"

"It shall not take you long, either!" exclaimed her husband, rushing into the room and clasping her in his arms. "Oh, Clara—my own Clara, you shall never again hunger for the affection which you crave. I have been a brute to treat you so. You shall henceforth be my own little wife!"

"Oh, George, I know you did not mean to be cruel! But I'll see that you don't have any more insipid coffee."

"Never mind that now, darling; we won't grumble any more. But, come; I think some fresh air will do you good. Get ready, and I will take you for a walk."

"Nothing would delight me more," returned the wife, looking up into her husband's face affectionately. "I shall be ready in a very few minutes."

Little Lily entered just in time to hear this last remark, and said, "Papa shall take me to walk out with you, mamma?"

"Yes, darling, you shall go with us. Did I ever dream that I could be so supremely happy? Oh, I could not bear it alone!"

"You are not alone, darling; I am here to share it with you," said her husband, stooping and imprinting a kiss on the lips of his fair young wife.

Here we will leave them, hoping their future may be as undimmed as now, remembering one slight mistake or harsh word may wreck a whole life.

Seven Millions of Pores.

All day and all night the exhausted particles of every human system are passing off through seven millions of quarter-inch hose—that being about the length of the sweat-ducts connected with the pores. If these are obstructed, sickness ensues; if they were sealed up, the consequence would be death. It is one of the provinces of Hostetter's Stomach Bitters to keep the superficial escape pipes open, as well as those larger excretory organs, the bowels. The stomach and the skin sympathize, and it is through the Stomach that the Bitters act upon the cuticle, keeping it moist, elastic, and unfevered. The famous vegetable invigorant is a marvelous medicine; no other preparation known contains such a variety of curative and preservative elements, or acts, at the same time, in such a variety of beneficial ways. In dyspepsia it strengthens the stomach, improves the appetite, and controls the liver: in fever and ague, it breaks up the fits; in cases of physical prostration it is literally a vital specific.

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SATURDAY EVENING POST,
PHILADELPHIA.

Founded August 4th, A. D. 1821.

R. J. C. WALKER, Editor and Proprietor.

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All communications MUST be addressed to

R. J. C. WALKER, Publisher & Proprietor,
727 Walnut St., Philadelphia.

Saturday Evening, May 23, 1874.

NOTICE.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, with its subscription list and good will, have been sold to R. J. C. Walker, Esq., of this city, who will hereafter continue the publication of the same.

As we believe Mr. Walker to possess the facilities for maintaining the high character as a Literary Paper which THE POST heretofore has enjoyed, we commend him cordially to the continued support and patronage of our subscribers.

THE SATURDAY POST
PUBLISHING COMPANY.

A LAST WORD.

Owing to the sale of THE POST to Mr. Walker, as notified above, the long and pleasant editorial connection between this paper and myself is brought to an end. To thousands of its readers, who have been subscribers for many years, I trust that I appear by this time somewhat in the light of a personal friend. And to them, as to all others, I would fain say something which should be warm from the heart, at the same time that I feel how cold and inadequate words always are on such occasions. Let me simply say to all, therefore, Farewell!

HENRY PETERSON,
Late Editor SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A few words, with reference to the above announcement, may not be out of place, and perhaps may be expected.

For more than half a century, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST has maintained an established position as

THE LEADING FAMILY AND STORY PAPER OF AMERICA,

and has gained for itself by its own intrinsic merit, and not through any extraneous influence brought to bear upon it, a host of earnest and cordial friends and admirers, many of whose names have been borne on its subscription list for over thirty, and some even over forty years consecutively.

In the future, under a more liberal management, and with greater facilities for improvement, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST will continue to be noted, as heretofore, for the literary excellence and the refined and moral character of its Serials; its vivid and charming Short Stories and Sketches, and its interesting Papers and Gossip relating to Persons of Note, the prominent Incidents of the times, and the leading Fashions of the day, for which latter subject a new and entirely separate department has been established.

The readers of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST may rest assured that no efforts will be spared to make the Oldest of the Literary Weeklies one of—if not the very Best.

R. J. C. WALKER.

A SINGULAR PRACTICE.

Some of the hill tribes in Northern India have a peculiar way of sending their babes to sleep, which is thus described by a correspondent—"Near a hollow bamboo, which served as a spout, through which the cool water of the mountain stream poured forth in a jet, was disposed the head of an infant, who was lying covered warmly and fast asleep. The bamboo spout was so placed that the water played upon the crown of the baby's head, over a part which seemed bald of hair, a consequence, perhaps, of the habitual action of the water. The children (there were two of them) were lying on their right sides and perfectly still, one would fancy in a state of stupefaction. They had been lying for an hour and a half, we were told, and would be there till nine at night; in all, between four and five hours. I felt the face of one of them and found it cold, and then held the wrist, but could detect no pulse. Yet these hill people are convinced that the strange practice, which is quite general, helps to strengthen the brain, and makes the children not only healthy, but hardy and fearless."

THE greater importance we attach to our opinions, the greater our intolerance, which is wrong even when we are right, and doubly so when we are in error, so that persecution for opinion's sake can never be justifiable.

A FLOWER FANCY.

Some flowers are like faces of friends that died;
This lily, white as a flower can be,
Sets sail a thought on memory's tide,
And down from the years it drifts to me.
A thought of a face with a lily's grace,
Its pure white beauty of youth. Ah me!
But the grave is dark, and the grave is deep,
And the face like a lily I see more see.

And here is a rose. I am thinking now
Of a face like a rose in memory,
With a touch of sunshine on lip and brow,
Ah, but the sunshine is hidden from me!
Oh, beautiful face, with the dainty grace
Of a queen red rose in each dimpled cheek,
You are dead with the roses of Summer time;
If a man sheds tears do you call him weak?

And here is a violet, fair and shy
With the fragrance of Summer gathered here
In its yellow heart, and I can but sigh
For a face that was sweet as the violets are,
A face most fair, with yellow hair,
Like a sunny tangle on neck and brow,
And a smile in the beautiful violet eyes.
Ah! but the grave's mold hides them now!

I catch the odor of the mignonette,
And a face from the fragrance looks at me;
Oh, friend, dead friend, I shall never forget
How royal the plainest of things can be;
For under a face that lacked for grace
You'd a heart that was grand as heart can be;
And its love as sweet as this mignonette.
Yes, your face has beauty, dear friend, for me.

Here is a snowdrop, dainty and white,
A delicate creature of frost and air;
A face looks out of the flower to-night,
A child's face, framed in flossy hair.
And I think, with tears, of a child whose years
Were only four when she went away.
And I know that my snowdrop face is fair
In the beautiful gardens of God to-day.

A GOOD MAXIM.

BY D. K. ROBERTS.

In the private office of a New York merchant, a young man, verging upon his twenty-first year, stood before his employer in the character of a culprit. The face of the merchant exhibited a sternness which betokened the possession of a character in which what the world calls dogged resolution was the prevailing element.

"I tell you again," said he, "I cannot—*will* not overlook your offence."

"Believe me, sir," appealed the youth, "I had no criminal intention; the fault was entirely unpremeditated—it was an act of folly, which I shall never—oh, sir, never repeat."

One of those cold and pitiless smiles which so forcibly express incredulity swept across the merchant's face, and he waved his hand as if he wished the interview to be terminated.

The young man, whose countenance up to this moment had been burning with shame, now became deadly pale; he saw his employer's determination was not to be shaken, and that disgrace stared him in the face. He made a vain effort at another appeal, but the words died on his lips, and a feeling of despair utterly extinguished the faint hopes he had entertained of being mercifully dealt with.

"My poor mother?" gasped he, hiding his face in his hands, and sobbing bitterly.

The merchant's hard features slightly relaxed—perhaps he loved his mother dearly; but the feeling, whatever it might have been, was only a transient one.

"Walter Jackson," said he, in hard, ringing tones, which instantly roused the young man from his grief; "I tell you once again, my mind is made up, and the sooner you leave my office the better. I never prosecute in small cases like yours; begone, and never let me see or hear from you again."

The delinquent, awed by that iron will, mechanically turned upon his heel and left the office. Stunned and bewildered by the catastrophe which had in one moment crushed all his young heart's hopes, he moved along the streets like a man drunk, or bending beneath a burden which exposed him to the mercy of the passers-by.

It was not until he had received many a hearty push that he became sensible of the annoyance he was causing, and then, obeying an instinctive timidity, he rushed headlong from the leading thoroughfare into those alleys and passages which vein the metropolis from one end to the other.

After wandering about for some time, he retired to the parlor of an obscure public-house, not with any defined purpose, but merely to avoid the glare of broad noonday. In that dim retreat, the grave of many a misspent hour, with no companion but his own miserable thoughts, he endured all the agony which a susceptible conscience can inflict upon an erring man. His follies rose up in judgment against him, and with them, like angels in evil company, came his affections, and, with all his faults, his dearly-loved associations with mankind.

Two faces were before him—one, that of his mild, loving mother—the other, that of the inflexible master he had wronged. On the one side there was the holy, all-enduring love of a parent; on the other, the anger and resentment he had roused by his conduct. Sad contrast to be created in so young a mind! Then another face would appear: now it was smiling at him over his mother's shoulder; then it peered into the iron visage of the merchant, as if asking a question; and then it vanished, casting upon him a pale look of sorrow, mingled with ill-starred love's sad farewell.

The future, then, by a natural transition, opened upon him an appalling gloom; and shadows, grim and shapeless, stood upon his path, both rear and front; and hope, the heart's ease, slept in the impenetrable darkness his guilt had created. The little world in which he had so happily lived was dead to him; it had crumbled from under his feet, and he had fallen on the flinty way of lost honour. What was there left him but remorse—bitter, ceaseless remorse?

Oppressed and weighed down by a heavy fear, he stole from that noisome place to ramble like a fallen spirit, until the hour at which he usually returned from his labors to the home where he was welcomed by a mother's smile and fond attentions. Hardening himself to play a deceptive part in her presence, he approached the door with a confidence which his conscience too surely told him was but audacious assurance. And when he took his seat at the tea table, and responded to her gentle inquiries, he did so outwardly unabashed; but within, far from human eye, he felt the glow of shame's blush, and the torture which the contrast between vice and virtue renders more acute.

His unsuspecting parent noticed no change in him during the whole of that trying evening, and when he retired to his chamber he received her blessing with a stoicism which almost amounted to cold indifference. But when he had only himself to deal with, the actor forgot his part, and once more became the conscience-stricken man of guilt. Despair, with its harrowing convictions, prostrated the whole of his faculties, and he groaned in the helplessness of his condition. He threw himself undressed on the bed, and yielded to the evil fates by which he saw himself surrounded.

This despair is a dangerous thing to encourage, for it swallows up more victims than any other human weakness. It strikes down the strong and the good, and opens those avenues to the heart by which demons enter, and make men fiends, both great and small. Oh! despair is a terrible feeling; and our young Walter had it in all its aggravated severity. He moaned and he cried, and then he clenched his fists and beat the air, execrated himself, then others, and finally sprang from the bed like a savage darting upon his prey. His eyes sparkled, his chest heaved, and his whole attitude was that of menace and defiance.

"Since I cannot go back," thought he, setting his teeth firmly together, "I will go forward; and woe be it to——"

At this critical moment his glance fell on a picture hanging against the wall: it was the head of our Saviour, and the gift of his mother. A long, long look did he take at the mild face which smiled so sweetly from its canvas, and then he burst into tears. They were the best he had ever shed, for they opened up to him the fountains of a new life, and extinguished those unholy sparks which despair had kindled in his bosom. After his powerful emotion had in some degree subsided, he knelt down by the bedside, and prayed as only those can who need Divine assistance.

He rose calm and refreshed, and seated himself at a little table, to deliberate on the course he should pursue. Many and various were his thoughts, but they all partook of the tone of one grand, all-commanding sentiment, and by that he was resolved to be guided. The coinage of his brain was distilled in that best of all alembics—his heart: and gradually there was accumulated within him a gentle flowing river of thought, beside which Hope stood waving her green branch, and bidding him, in honeyed accents "Never despair."

In the morning he rose, after a dreamless night, vigorous and determined, and hastened to carry out one of the most difficult of the three resolutions he had formed—that was, to part, perhaps for ever, with the girl he loved.

"Mary," said he, gazing mournfully into her tearful face, "I love you as well, indeed better, at this moment, than ever I did; but we must part. Circumstances have occurred which render this painful step necessary."

"Cannot you explain, Walter?" demanded she, clinging to him.

"Dear Mary, don't ask me—I cannot," replied he, painfully. "I cannot, indeed—only to Heaven. Listen," continued he, solemnly: "to-morrow I shall be far away from you; and the probability is that it would be a very long time—at present, I think, many years—before we should meet again; so that continuing our engagement is a mere mockery, because the chances are that I shall be unable to keep it."

"Oh?" exclaimed Mary, wounded to the quick by a sentiment she misunderstood.

"Do not mistake me," said he, taking her hand, and struggling to subdue his own strong emotion; "I love you dearly, and that is the reason I do not wish you to remain bound to what may never be fulfilled on my part. You, I know, would be faithful and true; but why should you waste the bloom of your youth, and neglect the many opportunities you will have of making yourself happy, for the sake of a man you may never see again? No, Mary; you shall not do so; from this moment you are free, and may Heaven bless you!"

The maiden hung down her head and cried bitterly, for she felt that her young hopes were about to be withered.

Walter, animated by the new feelings he had acquired, was invincible; his duty required the sacrifice, and it should be made. Undoubtedly it was one of the greatest he could have made, for he might have played upon the girl's credulity, and maintained his position as lover without the remotest prospect or intention of becoming her husband. But with the resolution to do right comes a consideration for others, which weakens the natural selfishness of the heart, and gives it the power to make those stern sacrifices which honour so frequently demands.

"Now for my mother," thought he, and trembled at the interview before him; for had the alternative been presented to him, he would have preferred that the maiden he had parted with should have been acquainted with his error, than that his mother, his irreproachable mother, should have known that he had brought shame upon the name of the parent who had been so honoured and respected when alive.

After a protracted conversation with his mother, she yielded to his entreaties, and consented to retire to a more humble dwelling. The removal was speedily effected; and on the evening of the day on which they took possession of the two apartments which were henceforth to be their home, the mother, bewildered by the change, inquired from her son why he had gone so far from the office.

"I have left Mr. Miller's employ—he was dissatisfied with me," replied Walter, slightly blushing at the equivocation.

"Dissatisfied with you!" exclaimed the mother. "Oh, Walter, there is something in all this I don't understand; first, you bid Mary farewell, then you induce me to leave Cloudesley Street, and now you tell me you have left your office. Walter, my dear son, do not conceal anything from me."

Walter's lip quivered, and his eye avoided his mother's steady gaze; but, making a great effort, he soon recovered himself, and seeing that he must be cool and firm, or all would be explained, and perhaps so shock his mother as to do her serious injury, he addressed himself to her in the calm language of reason. He explained that he had been discharged by Mr. Miller, owing to his being extremely dissatisfied with him, and that as he never intended to return to that line of business again, it was necessary, until he had established himself in some other, that his mother, deprived of the assistance of his salary, should be placed in such a position as would enable her to live on the slender annuity she enjoyed.

"My son," said the mother, affected at this instance of filial devotion; "but why separate from Mary?"

"Because," replied Walter, "I wooed her under favorable circumstances, became gracious in her eyes by the aid of those circumstances, and now that they have disappeared, my duty to her and myself demands that I should withdraw from her society. Our position toward each other has undergone a change—she is in the same condition, while I am poor, very poor; and love and poverty rarely agree."

"You know little yet of a woman's heart, Walter," said his mother, smiling, "or you would be aware that, provided a man retains his honor, she cares little in her youth about the trash which the world calls wealth."

This remark caused Walter to turn pale as death, and almost to fall from his seat, fainting. His alarmed mother flew to his assistance, and beseeched him to make a confidant of her; for she was sure, she said, he had something concealed from her which caused him the most poignant distress.

With the utmost difficulty he reassured her, and when both were more calm he solemnly requested her to grant him a favour.

"What is it?" she inquired.

"Trust me," replied he, sinking on his knees before her.

"I will!" she emphatically exclaimed, falling on his neck; and from that day forth the subject was never renewed between them.

"Two resolutions triumphantly carried out," said Walter, after his mother had retired; "and to-morrow is the nativity of the third."

Taking a large piece of paper he wrote upon it, in a very large round hand, the talismanic words, "Never despair!" and then fastened it to the curtains at the foot of his bed, so that he might have the sentence before him to read night and morning.

While he sleeps, and dreams of restored honor and improved position in society, let us ask whether any person would deny that greater battles are fought in the moral world than the physical, or that the holiest struggles are those which are carried on with the world in privacy and seclusion? No blood-stained knight ever couched lance against a foe more gallantly than did our brave Walter in this his first great moral battle. The victory was attended with a present loss, it is true, but with a mighty prospective gain; for he had acquired hope and faith in the future. There was growing within him a power which would be to him as the dew of heaven is to the flower of the earth. Instead of groveling despair, he would have a strength and loftiness of purpose associated with the holiest aspirations, and a deep and lasting faith, which would lift him above the sordidness of his condition, and enable him to believe in the goodness of man and the love of his Creator.

The struggle with life was an arduous and protracted one; but as it is not our intention to follow Walter in all his wanderings, we can only relate that he found no employment too mean for his industry, and no occupation disgraceful, unless criminal or dishonorable. At the end of six years, by dint of the most indefatigable labour—and hard, common-day labor alone—he had accumulated from his savings sufficient to pay his first employer the amount of the defalcation, together with interest up to the day of payment.

Noon had just been proclaimed when Walter presented himself at the office of the merchant. With some difficulty he obtained a private interview.

"Well, my man?" said the merchant, in no very amiable manner, for Walter's apparel was not very attractive.

"Six years ago, this very day," said Walter, modestly, but firmly, "you dismissed from your service a clerk named Walter Jackson, for a defalcation in the account entrusted to him. I am Walter Jackson, and here is the amount owing to you, with interest at five per cent. I have been unable to pay you sooner, or I would most gladly have done so. Now, to my great relief, I am able and I beg in addition that you will accept my most grateful thanks for the forbearance you exercised towards me on that distressing occasion."

Surprise for a time held the merchant mute, but when he recovered, he stretched forth his hand to the workman, and, when he received that of the latter, shook it warmly. He then requested Walter to relate what had befallen him since their separation. Walter did so in a brief but clear and unreserved manner.

"So the moment you left this office you determined to make restitution?" said the merchant, smiling, evidently highly gratified with the narrative.

"Oh, no!" replied Walter; "I was tempted to do worse first."

"Indeed! how?" inquired the merchant, whose curiosity was roused.

"By thinking I could never redeem my lost character," answered Walter.

"What saved you?" asked the merchant, eagerly.

"Two words," said Walter, a glow animating his naturally fine countenance—"Never despair."

The merchant saw a kindred spirit before him, and detained Walter in conversation for some time. In the course of many revelations which were obtained from him, he stated that he had found time to acquire knowledge as well as labor, and that some of the sweetest hours he had spent were those devoted to study. Before they parted, the worthy merchant insisted upon presenting Walter with two thousand dollars.

The sum enabled him to set up business; he progressed rapidly—his mother was restored to a beautiful home—and he never felt so proud or happy as on the day he led Mary to the altar.

The Shocking Ignorance of Men.

BY A LADY.

It is all very well for the self-styled lords of the creation to laugh at what they call the shocking ignorance of women. Whilst they are so satirical at our expense, perhaps it never strikes them that we could show them up, if we pleased, just as well as they can make game of us. Whole volumes would not suffice to convey a perfect idea of the shocking ignorance of men; but a few specimens will enable our readers to form some little notion of it. To show what men are in this respect, we will instance only the following answers which we have heard given to the simplest questions, and *ex unum disce omnibus*, as they say.

Augustus had heard of such a thing as a gusset. It was something in the sleeve. Believed it was the same thing as a cuff, but was not certain. It was a part of the skirt, for aught he knew. Had no notion whether it was round or square.

Eustace was familiar with the word "tuck." Had heard his sisters make use of it. Concluded it was something about a dress; it might be a loop, or perhaps a flounce. Knew it was a term used in needle-work, or otherwise would have supposed it meant something to eat.

Horace thought vandyke was a picture.

Adolphus described clear-starching as a mystery.

Albert could not tell what he would send to the mangle; if he had to guess, would say a chemisette, not that he by any means knew what that was. Crimping was an operation performed on skate and codfish, and sometimes on a sailor. Supposed counterpanes were ironed as well as sheets. Could not precisely say what ticking was; would predicate it of a watch.

Edwin could not tell a gingham from a merino nor a delaine. Believed it was all stuff. Imagined that a shot silk was a silk speckled or dotted; the aspect it presented would probably resemble the small-pox.

William regarded a cross-stitch as a puzzle. Blue-stone was sapphire used in making rings. Had no conception of the use of pearl-ash or soda in a house, and conceived that hearthstones were employed to pave the kitchen fire-place.

There! So much for the knowledge of men, who pride themselves so vastly on their superior intelligence.

POETRY should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thought, and appear almost as a remembrance.

To exchange a present good for a promised better, is giving a greater credit to hope, than wisdom would appear to dictate.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

The calling in which a man is trained necessarily exercises a considerable influence in the development of his character. It affects his gait, his manner, and his speech, as well as his mental and moral characteristics.

It is impossible to mistake the military man. He is an illustration of the power of discipline. The new recruit—the clodhopper from the plough—is soon licked into shape—becomes a smart, well-set-up fellow, and never afterwards relapses into the lout.

How different is the sailor! He rolls about on his sea-legs—his feet always seem as if they were grasping for a footing. His manner is free and easy, with nothing of the precision and formality of the military man. His feelings, manners, and ideas are of a piece with his outer man. There is no mistaking Jack Tar for Corporal Trim.

It is the same with other trades and professions. Take a lawyer, for instance. Habit and discipline have made him precise and systematic in the transaction of business. He is a martinet in all things. His mind is made up of pigeon-holes, in which his facts and ideas are filed and docketed in regular alphabetical order. He is a red-tapist even at heart. He keeps old letters and lays them up as evidence. His whole character becomes fixed and determined by his profession. There is no mistaking the lawyer.

The divine is the very opposite. He has no knowledge whatever of business or ruinous habits. He is the most innocent of mortals. Of all professional men, he knows the least of practical life. He is always making blunders if he meddles with business. His business is speech. He is a student, a reader of books, a writer of sermons. And students are generally men of little practical wisdom. A man who is great in the dead languages is rarely great at anything else. He may know all about Greece and Rome, but next to nothing about his own age and country. He may even be ignorant of its literature. Hugh Miller says, in his autobiography, that "all the great readers of my acquaintance—the men most extensively acquainted with English literature—were not the men who had received the classical education. In that common sense which reasons but does not argue, and which enables men to pick their stepping prudently through the journey of life, I found that classical education gave no superiority whatever; nor did it appear to form so fitting an introduction to the realities of business as that course of dealing with things tangible and actual in which the working man has to exercise his faculties, and from which he derives his experience."

The medical man, again, is something quite different from either the lawyer or the divine. He is very much of a "lady's man." He possesses no marked individuality of character. By habituating himself to humor the foibles of people of all kinds, he merges his own individuality, but becomes a very accommodating, agreeable, chatty, gossiping, kindly person. His success in business depends mainly on this, and so his character is influenced and formed. Such men as Abernethy, who preserve their strong individuality throughout their professional career, are the exceptions which go to prove the rule.

A SOLEMN SUBJECT.

When we see how lightly and thoughtlessly people skip into their married lives, much in the same way often as the clown skips into the circus ring, with a "here we are, ladies and gentlemen," we can but wonder and experience feelings of regret. The three serious points of life are birth, marriage, and death. We do not know much about the first, in our own individual cases, of course; but we are very solemn about the approach of the last. We take thought for it, and desire to set in order things temporal and spiritual. Of what lies beyond we know so little that we fear it.

Yet, after all, it is not much more an unknown land than the land of wedlock; and it is a great deal easier and much happier to die than to lead such lives as many people do after the wedding-ring is slipped on the woman's finger and she has said "I will." Sometimes she won't, after all her promises, when to love, honor, and obey is not in her. Sometimes *he* forgets all about cherishing and protecting; and there is generally a great tribulation, if "with his worldly goods" he forgets to "her endow." And then, again, when outwardly all is well, often there are skeletons in the closets. She may be a shrew; he may be sulky. She may fret; he may forget that he has any duties besides those of rent-payer and provider of food. There may be nothing sweet in marriage; and if there is not, how much better to remain single, and dream on!

Who but must shudder a little at the thought of leading the sort of life that some women lead, who do not complain, and really have no tangible complaint to make. Should a woman say, "My husband starves me!" men would cry, "Shame on the brute!" If she should say, "He starves my heart," they would smile. Yet brown bread and a lover is better than feasting and neglect.

And then, again, a man who sees another a mere money-box may ask himself, "Will the day come when the adorable Angelina will care not for me, but for my purse, and spend my money to deck herself for the eyes of other men?"

Ah, there is so much to dread! It is like a bath we have not tested. We may get into hot water—we may have a chill. What does he know of her, who only sees her in her prettiest dress and sweetest smiles? What does she know of him, who has met him only in his best coat and company manners? Nothing, sometimes. Sometimes—with that subtle penetration of the heart for which there is no name—all.

Yet we do not suppose one in twenty takes the trouble to think about these solemn matters. A week or two of flirtation, a ring, a kiss, a flutter of the heart, and on they come, with a jingle of bells, a flash of diamonds—if they can afford it—with an air which says, "Here we are again, another married couple!"

Yet we know what Jennie said to her old grandfather, when he remarked, "It's an awfu' solemn thing to be married, Jennie." "Ay, grandfather, but it's solemner not to be married at all."

EVERY point of thought is the centre of an intellectual world.

THE remembrances of past happiness are the wrinkles of the soul.

MAN should not dispute or assert, but whisper results to his neighbors.

ALL severity which does not tend to increase good or prevent evil, is idle.

WHAT a pity, that common sense, for want of use, should have become uncommon.

LAWS are like grapes, that being too much pressed, yield a hard and unwholesome wine.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

A western exchange speaks of "a life-size statue of Seward, sixteen feet high."

The great want of Fair Play, a town in Colorado, is "a car load of marriageable girls."

WEDDINGS often leave the old familiar hearts and places as haunted and empty as funerals. They are the funerals of old associations.

THE great struggles in life are limited to moments; in the drooping of the head upon the bosom—in the pressure of the hand upon the brow.

CONSCIENCE is a sleeping giant; we may lull him into a longer or shorter slumber; but his starts are frightful, and terrible is the hour when he awakes.

THE BEAUTIFUL SNOW.—The Pomological Society of Michigan emphasizes what should be a familiar fact—that in high latitudes snow protects vegetation from destruction by frost, serving nature literally as an ermine cloak, without which the cold must reach vital centres and deal irretrievable destruction.

FISH IN THE BLOOD.—Among the hosts of minute forms of life inhaled into the lungs in the atmosphere we breathe are certain microscopical creatures which become the living fish of our blood; but as it takes 75,000,000 of these to make the bulk of a grain, we need not be much alarmed at the piscatorial visitation.

BLOOD WILL TELL.—At the hospital known as the Hotel Dieu, in Lyons, some weeks ago, a female patient was sinking rapidly by exhaustion from hemorrhage, when Dr. Vincent, the attending surgeon, chivalrously caused several ounces of his own blood to be transfused into her veins, and she was saved.

King Kalakaua's popularity appears to be assured. At the time of his election he was foreman of an engine company, having served in the fire department of Honolulu for thirteen years; and now he has announced his determination to consider himself still an active member, and in case of emergency to join the firemen at the brakes.

In St. John's College, Oxford, there is a very curious portrait of Charles I, done with a pen, in such a manner that the lines are formed by verses from the Psalms, and so contrived as to contain every Psalm. When Charles II was once at Oxford he was greatly struck with this portrait, begged it of the college, and promised in return to grant them *whatever* request they should make. This they consented to, and gave his Majesty the picture, accompanied with the request that he would—return it.

Mr. Pullman is said to have been much horrified at the speed with which his palace car was put through on a trial trip on the Midland (England) Railway recently. Despite the fact that there was a large number of swells on board, including the Rothschilds, the superintendent kept up the rate of seventy miles per hour, while Mr. Pullman, who knew that any accident would be attributed in some way to his carriages, sat in a fur from "painful" state of mind.

EXPLORATIONS IN AUSTRALIA.—As one result of the recent explorations of Mr. Gosse and his party in western Australia, we learn that they have discovered a huge monolith, 1,100 feet high, and six or seven miles in girth at its base, and the interest in the discovery is heightened by the fact that a stream of water fed by a spring in the centre of the conglomerate flows from the rock. Those who take an interest in geological studies will wait with impatience some further particulars regarding this immense pyramid, which is destined to become famous as one of the most singular and prominent of Australian landmarks.

The Petroleum districts of Burmah are said to have yielded oil for over two thousand years, but they have only of late years been worked to anything like their capacity. The demand for petroleum has been very great since the discovery of the oil wells of this State and the use of petroleum products by enterprising Americans in nearly all kinds of industry, and this demand has created an "oil fever" in Burmah. In one district there are 450 oil wells, varying in depth from 160 to 210 feet, and in the other about seventy of from 60 to 80 feet in depth. The most of them are new, and others are being added daily. Around the recently dug wells the out-throw consists of blue clay, accompanied with calcerous filaments, and sometimes with bituminous slate.

HELPLESS WOMEN.—Miss Emily Faithfull has written to an English paper that there is no royal road for women; that women must travel the same paths as men in seeking their fortunes, and that they cannot, as some she has met seem to think, jump without any previous training into any kind of employment. "Hundreds of women," she writes, "apply at the Industrial and Educational Bureau in Priest street each week. When asked, 'What can you do?' they answer, 'Anything you can give me.' This report of themselves, when tested, means they can do nothing at all. At this moment I could send any number of untrained and, therefore, unqualified women to fill any post which may be offered, but I have considerable difficulty in finding those really fit for the few positions opening out in various directions."

The Tichborne trial is over, but the agitation of the subject seems to be still continued. Dr. Kenealy, the claimant's counsel, has been expelled from the bar mess of the Oxford Circuit, because of unprofessional conduct in criticising the conduct of the Chief Justice, and on the 18th of May is to be examined by the Benchers of Gray's Inn on the same charge. He persists in his statement that the claimant is Tichborne, and says that the real Arthur Orton will be in England in less than twelve months. The evidence on the trial was certainly conflicting, but the drift of the testimony was against the claimant, and since the trial some important witnesses have confessed that he was Arthur Orton. Nevertheless mass meetings have been held to express sympathy with Dr. Kenealy, and to raise subscriptions in his behalf. In the meantime more litigation is preparing on the subject of paying costs, to the amount of $200,000.

The Native wines produced in the United States are estimated in round numbers at twenty millions of gallons. California, the largest producer, yields one-fourth this amount, five millions; Ohio about one-sixth, three and one-half millions; New York three millions; Missouri and Illinois each two and one-half millions, and Philadelphia two millions. In these six States are produced all the wines of the country, except about one million and one-half of gallons raised in smaller quantities in the other States. Wines are produced, however, in some quantity in nearly every State and Territory, 20,000 gallons a year being credited to New Jersey, and 5,000 gallons to Delaware. The annual value of our wine crop is about $14,000,000.

THE OLD STORY.

When visions of her face come o'er me,
Of her sweet face so far away,
I say what lovers said before me,
What lovers will forever say:
That flowers bloom sweeter for her being,
That birds sing sweeter for her seeing,
That grass is greener, skies more blue,
That all things take a richer hue.
Lovers have said these things before;
Lovers will say them evermore.

O, sweet young love, that in all ages
Bears ever one eternal form!
With lasting youth your oldest pages
Glow ever, ever fresh and warm.
O, dear old story, ever young!
Poets have painted, artists sung:
Sure, naught in life is half so sweet;
Death cannot make you incomplete.
Lovers have said these things before;
Lovers will say them evermore.

EAST LYNNE;

OR

THE ELOPEMENT.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE YEARNING OF A BREAKING HEART.

At her bedroom door, the next morning, stood Lady Isabel, listening whether the coast was clear, ere she descended to the grey parlor, for she had a shrinking dread of encountering Mr. Carlyle. When he was glancing narrowly at her face the previous evening she had felt the gaze, and it impressed upon her the dread of his recognition. Not only that; he was the husband of another; therefore it was not expedient that she should see too much of him, for he was far dearer to her heart than he had ever been.

Almost at the same moment, there burst out of a remote room, the nursery, an upright, fair, noble boy, of some five years old, who began careering along the corridor, astride upon a hearth-broom. She did not need to be told it was her boy, Archibald; his likeness to Mr. Carlyle would have proclaimed it, even if her heart had not. In an impulse of unrestrainable tenderness, she seized the child, as he was galloping past her, and carried him into her room, broom and all.

"You must let me make acquaintance with you," said she to him, by way of excuse. "I love little boys."

Love! Down she sat upon a low chair, the child held upon her lap, kissing him passionately, and the tears raining from her eyes. She could not have helped the tears had it been to save her life; she could as little have helped the kisses. Lifting her eyes, there stood Wilson, who had entered without ceremony. A sick feeling came over Lady Isabel: she felt as if she had betrayed herself. All that could be done now was to make the best of it; to offer some lame excuse. What possessed her, thus to forget herself?

"He did so put me in remembrance of my own children," she said to Wilson, gulping down her emotion, and hiding her tears in the best manner she could; whilst the astonished Archibald, released now, stood with his finger in his mouth, and stared at her spectacles, his great blue eyes opened to their utmost width. "When we have lost children of our own, we are apt to love fondly all we come near."

Wilson, who stared only in a less degree than Archie, for she deemed the new governess had gone suddenly mad, gave some voluble assent, and turned her attention upon Archie.

"You naughty young monkey! how dare you rush out in that way with Sarah's hearth-broom? I'll tell you what it is, sir? you are getting a mighty deal too cowdacious and runnbustical for the nursery. I shall speak to your mamma about it."

She seized hold of the child and shook him. Lady Isabel started forward, her hands up, her voice one of painful entreaty.

"Oh, don't, don't beat him! I cannot see him beaten."

"Beaten!" echoed Wilson; "if he got a good beating it would be all the better for him; but it's what he never does get. A little shake, or a tap, is all I must give; and it's not half enough. You wouldn't believe the sturdy impudence of that boy, madame; he runs riot, he does. The other two never gave a quarter of the trouble. Come along, you figure! I'll have a bolt put at the top of the nursery door; and if I did, he'd be for climbing up the door-post to get at it."

The last sentence Wilson delivered to the governess as she jerked Archie out of the room, along the passage, and into the nursery. Lady Isabel sat down with a wrung heart, a chafed spirit. Her own child! and she might not say to the servant, you shall not beat him!

She descended to the grey parlor. The two elder children, and breakfast, were waiting; Joyce quitted the room when she entered it.

A graceful girl of eight years old, a fragile boy a year younger, both bearing her own once lovely features—her once bright and delicate complexion—her large, soft, brown eyes. How utterly her heart yearned to them; but there must be no scene like there had just been above. Nevertheless, she stooped and kissed them both—one kiss each of impassioned fervor. Lucy was naturally silent, William somewhat talkative.

"You are our new governess," said he.

"Yes. We must be good friends."

"Why not?" said the boy. "We were good friends with Miss Manning. I am to go into Latin soon—as soon as my cough's gone. Do you know Latin?"

"No—not to teach it," she said, studiously avoiding all endearing epithets.

"Papa said you would be almost sure not to know Latin, for that ladies rarely did. He said he should send up Mr. Kane to teach me."

"Mr. Kane?" repeated Lady Isabel, the name striking upon her memory. "Mr. Kane, the music-master?"

"How did you know he was a music-master?" cried shrewd William. And Lady Isabel felt the red blood flush to her face at the unlucky admission she had made. It flushed deeper at her own falsehood, as she muttered some evasive words about hearing of him from Mrs. Latimer.

"Yes, he is a music-master; but he does not get much money at it, and he teaches the classics as well. He has come up to teach us music since Miss Manning left: mamma said that we ought not to lose our lessons."

Mamma! How the word, applied to Barbara, grated on her ear.

"Whom does he teach?" she asked.

"Us two," replied William, pointing to his sister and himself.

"Do you always take bread and milk?" she inquired, perceiving that to be what they were eating.

"We get tired of it sometimes, and then we have milk and water, and bread and butter, or honey; and then we take to bread and milk again. It's Aunt Cornelia who thinks we should eat bread and milk for breakfast. She says papa never had anything else when he was a boy."

Lucy looked up.

"Papa would give me an egg when I breakfasted with him," cried she, "and Aunt Cornelia said it was not good for me, but papa gave it to me all the same. I always had breakfast with him then."

"And why do you not now?" asked Lady Isabel.

"I don't know. I have not since mamma came."

The word "stepmother" rose up rebelliously in the heart of Lady Isabel. Was Mrs. Carlyle putting away the children from their father?

Breakfast over, she gathered them to her, asking them various questions about their studies, their hours of recreation, the daily routine of their lives.

"This is not the school-room, you know," cried William, when she made some inquiry as to their books.

"No?"

"The school-room is upstairs. This is for our meals, and for you in an evening."

The voice of Mr. Carlyle was heard at this juncture in the hall, and Lucy was springing toward the sound. Lady Isabel, fearful lest he might enter, if the child showed herself, stopped her with a hurried hand.

"Stay here, Isabel."

"Her name's Lucy," said William, looking quickly up. "Why do you call her Isabel?"

"I thought—thought I had heard her called Isabel," stammered the unfortunate lady, feeling quite confused with the errors she was committing.

"My name is Isabel Lucy," said the child; "but I don't know who could have told you, for I am never called Isabel. I have not been since—since—shall I tell you? since mamma went away," she concluded, dropping her voice. "Mamma that was, you know."

"Did she go?" cried Lady Isabel, full of emotion, and possessing a very faint idea of what she was saying.

"She was kidnapped," whispered Lucy.

"Kidnapped!" was the surprised answer.

"Yes, or she would not have gone. There was a wicked man on a visit to papa, and he stole her. Wilson said she knew he was a kidnapper before he took mamma. Papa said I was never to be called Isabel again, but Lucy. Isabel was mamma's name."

"How do you know your papa said it?" dreamily returned Lady Isabel.

"I heard him. He said it to Joyce, and Joyce told the servants. I put only Lucy to my copies. I did put Isabel Lucy, but papa saw it one day, and he drew his pencil through Isabel, and told me to show it to Miss Manning. After that Miss Manning lets me put nothing but Lucy. I asked her why, and she told me papa preferred the name, and that I was not to ask questions."

She could not well stop the child, but every word was rending her heart.

"Lady Isabel was our very, very own mamma," pursued Lucy. "This mamma is not."

"Do you love this one as you did the other?" breathed Lady Isabel.

"Oh, I loved mamma—I loved mamma!" uttered Lucy, clasping her hands. "But it's all over. Wilson said we must not love her any longer, and Aunt Cornelia said it. Wilson said, if she loved us she would not have gone away from us."

"Wilson said so?" resentfully spoke Lady Isabel.

"She said she need not have let that man kidnap her. I am afraid he beat her, for she died. I lie in my bed at night, and wonder whether he did beat her, and what made her die. It was after she died that our new mamma came home. Papa said she was come to be our mamma in place of Lady Isabel, and we were to love her dearly."

"*Do* you love her?" almost passionately asked Lady Isabel.

Lucy shook her head.

"Not as I loved mamma."

Joyce entered to show the way to the school-room, and they followed her upstairs. As Lady Isabel stood at the window, she saw Mr. Carlyle depart on foot on his way to the office. Barbara was with him, hanging fondly on his arm, about to accompany him to the park gates. So had *she* fondly hung so had *she* accompanied him, in the days gone forever.

Barbara came into the school-room in the course of the morning, and entered upon the subject of their studies, the differently allotted hours, some to play, some to work. She spoke in a courteous but most decided tone, showing that she was the unmistakable mistress of the house and children, and meant to be. Never had Lady Isabel felt her position more keenly—never did it so gall and fret her spirit; but she bowed in meek obedience. A hundred times that day did she yearn to hold the children to her heart, and a hundred times she had to repress the longing.

In a soft, damask dress, not unlike the color of the walls from which the room took its name, a cap of Honiton lace shading her delicate features, sat Mrs. Hare. The justice was in London with Squire Pinner, and Barbara had gone to the Grove and brought her mamma away in triumph. It was evening now, and Mrs. Hare was paying a visit to the grey parlor. Miss Carlyle had been dining there, and Lady Isabel, under plea of a violent headache, had begged to decline the invitation to take tea in the drawing-room, for she feared the sharp eyes of Miss Carlyle. Barbara, upon leaving the dessert-table, went to the nursery, as usual, to her baby, and Mrs. Hare took the opportunity to go and sit a few minutes with the governess—she feared that governess must be very lonely. Miss Carlyle, scorning usage and ceremony, had remained in the dining-room with Mr. Carlyle, a lecture for him, upon some defalcation or other, most probably in store. Lady Isabel was alone. Lucy had gone to keep a birthday in the neighborhood, and William was in the nursery. Mrs. Hare found her in a sad attitude, her two hands pressed upon her temples. She had not yet made acquaintance with her beyond a minute's formal introduction.

"I am sorry to hear you are not well, this evening," she gently said.

"Thank you: My head aches much"—which was no false plea.

"I fear you must feel your solitude irksome. It is dull for you to be here all alone."

"I am so used to solitude."

Mrs. Hare sat down, and gazed with sympathy at the young, though somewhat strange-looking woman before her: she detected the signs of mental suffering on her face.

"You have seen sorrow," she uttered, bending forward, and speaking with the utmost sweetness.

"Oh, great sorrow," burst from Lady Isabel, for her wretched fate was very palpable to her mind, that evening, and the tone of sympathy rendered it nearly irrepressible.

"My daughter tells me that you have lost your children, that you have lost your fortune and position. Indeed, I feel for you. I wish I could comfort you!"

This did not decrease her anguish. She completely lost all self-control, and a gush of tears fell from her eyes.

"Don't pity me! don't pity me, dear Mrs. Hare! Indeed, it only makes endurance harder. Some of us," she added, looking up, with a sickly smile, "are born to sorrow."

"We are all born to it," cried Mrs. Hare. "I, in truth, have cause to say so. Oh, you know not what my portion has been—the terrible weight of grief that I have to bear. For many years, I can truly say that I have not known one completely happy moment."

"All do not have to bear this killing sorrow," said Lady Isabel.

"Rely upon it, sorrow of some nature does sooner or later come to all. In the brightest apparent lot on earth, dark days must mix. Not that there is a doubt but that it falls unequally. Some, as you observe, seem born to it, for it clings to them all their days: others are more favored—as we reckon favor. Perhaps this great amount of trouble is no more than is necessary to take us to heaven. You know the saying, 'Adversity hardens the heart, or it opens it to Paradise.' It may be that our hearts continue so hard that the long-continued life's trouble is requisite to soften them. My dear," Mrs. Hare added, in a lower tone, while the tears glistened on her pale cheeks, "there will be a blessed rest for the weary, when this toilsome life is ended: let us find comfort in that thought."

"Ay! ay!" murmured Lady Isabel. "It is all that is left to me."

"You are young, to have acquired so much experience of sorrow."

"We cannot estimate sorrow by years. We may live a whole lifetime of it in a single hour. But we generally bring ill-fate upon ourselves," she continued, in a desperation of remorse: "as our conduct is, so will our happiness or misery be."

"Not always," sighed Mrs. Hare. "Sorrow, I grant you, does come, all too frequently, from ill-doing; but the worst is, the consequences of this ill-doing fall upon the innocent as well as upon the guilty. A husband's errors will involve his innocent wife; parents' sins will fall upon their children; children will break the hearts of their parents. I can truly say, speaking in all humble submission, that I am unconscious of having deserved the great sorrow which came upon me; that no act of mine invited it on; but though it has nearly killed me, I entertain no doubt that it is lined with mercy, if I could only bring my weak, rebellious heart to look for it. You, I feel sure, have been equally undeserving."

She! Mrs. Hare marked not the flush of shame, the drooping of the eyelids.

"You have lost your little ones," Mrs. Hare resumed. "That is grief—great grief: I would not underrate it; but believe me, it is as *nothing* compared to the awful fate, should it ever fall upon you, of finding your children grow and become that which makes you wish they had died in their infancy. There are times when I am tempted to regret that *all* my treasures are not in the next world; that they have not gone before me. Yes; sorrow is the lot of all."

"Surely, not of all," dissented Lady Isabel. "There are some bright lots on earth."

"There is not a lot, but must bear its appointed share," returned Mrs. Hare.—"Bright as it may appear, ay, and as it may continue to be for years, depend upon it, some darkness must overshadow it, earlier or later."

"Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle—what sorrow can there be in store for them?" asked Lady Isabel, her voice ringing with a strange sound: which Mrs. Hare noted, though she understood it not.

"Mrs. Carlyle's lot is bright," she said, a sweet smile illuminating her features. "She loves her husband with an impassioned love; and he is worthy of it. A happy fate, indeed, is hers; but she must not expect to be exempted from sorrow. Mr. Carlyle has had his share of it," concluded Mrs. Hare.

"Ah!"

"You have, doubtless, been made acquainted with his history. His first wife left him; left home and her children. He bore it bravely before the world; but I know it wrung his very heart-strings. She was his heart's sole idol."

"She? Not Barbara?"

The moment the word "Barbara" escaped her lips, Lady Isabel recollected herself. She was only Madame Vine, the governess; what would Mrs. Hare think of her familiarity?

Mrs. Hare did not appear to have noticed it: she was absorbed in the subject.

"Barbara?" she uttered; "certainly not. Had his first love been given to Barbara, he would have chosen her then. It was given to Lady Isabel."

"It is given to his wife now."

Mrs. Hare nearly laughed.

"Of course it is; would you wish it to be buried in the grave with the dead?—and with one who was false to him? But, my dear, she was the sweetest woman, that unfortunate Lady Isabel. I loved her then, and I cannot help loving her still. Others blamed her, but I pitied. They were well matched: he, so good and noble—she, so lovely and endearing."

"And she left him! threw him to the winds, with all his nobility and love!" exclaimed that poor governess, with a gesture of the hands, that looked very like despair.

"Yes. It will not do to talk of it—it is a miserable subject. How she could abandon such a husband, such children, was a marvel to many; but to none more than it was to me and my daughter. The false step—though I feel almost ashamed to speak out the thought, lest it may appear to savor of triumph—while it must have secured her own wretchedness, led to the happiness of my child; for it is pretty certain Barbara would never love one as she loves Mr. Carlyle."

"It did secure wretchedness to her, you think?" cried Lady Isabel, her tone one of bitter mockery, more than anything else.

Mrs. Hare was surprised at the question.

"No woman ever took that fatal step yet, without its entailing on her the most dire wretchedness," she replied. "It cannot be otherwise. And Lady Isabel was of a nature to feel remorse beyond common—to meet it half way. Refined, modest, with every feeling of an English gentlewoman, she was the very last, one would have thought, to act so. It was as if she had gone away in a dream, not knowing what she was doing; I have thought so many a time.—That terrible mental wretchedness and remorse did overtake her, I know."

"How did you know that? Did you hear it?" exclaimed Lady Isabel, her tone all too eager had Mrs. Hare been suspicious. "Did he proclaim that—Francis Levison? Did you hear it from him?"

Mrs. Hare, gentle Mrs. Hare, drew herself up, for the words grated on her feelings and on her pride. Another moment, and she was mild and kind again, for she reflected that that poor, sorrowful governess must have spoken without thought.

"I know not what Sir Francis Levison may have chosen to proclaim," she said; "but you may be sure he would not be allowed opportunity to proclaim anything to me, or to any other friend of Mr. Carlyle's; nay, I should say, nor to any of the good and honorable. I heard it from Lord Mount Severn."

"From Lord Mount Severn!" repeated Lady Isabel. And she opened her lips to say something more, but closed them again.

"He was here on a visit in the summer; he stayed a fortnight. Lady Isabel was the daughter of the late earl—perhaps you may not have known that. He—Lord Mount Severn—told me, in confidence, that he had sought out Lady Isabel when the man, Levison, left her: he found her sick, poor, broken-hearted, in some remote French town, utterly borne down with remorse and repentance."

"Could it be otherwise?" sharply asked Lady Isabel.

"My dear, I have said it could not. The very thought of her deserted children would entail it, if nothing else did. There was a baby born abroad," added Mrs. Hare, dropping her voice, "an infant in its cradle, Lord Mount Severn said; but that child, we know, could only bring pain and shame."

"True," issued from her trembling lips.

"Next came her death; and I cannot but think it was sent to her in mercy. I trust she was prepared for it, and had made her peace with God. When all else is taken from us, we turn to Him: I hope she had learned to find the Refuge."

"How did Mr. Carlyle receive the news of her death?" murmured Lady Isabel, a question which had been often in her thoughts.

"I cannot tell: he made no outward sign either of satisfaction or grief. It was too delicate a subject for any one to enter upon with him, and most assuredly he did not enter upon it himself. After he was engaged to my child he told me he should never have married during Lady Isabel's life."

"From—from—the remains of affection?"

"I should think not. I inferred it to be from conscientious scruples. All his affection is given to his present wife. There is no doubt that he loves her with a true, a fervent, a lasting love: though there may have been more of romantic sentiment in the early passion felt for Lady Isabel.—Poor thing! she gave up a sincere heart, a happy home."

Ay, poor thing! She had very nearly wailed forth her vain despair.

"I wonder whether the drawing-room is tenanted yet," smiled Mrs. Hare, breaking a pause which had ensued. "If so, I suppose they will be expecting me there."

"I will ascertain for you," said Lady Isabel, speaking in the impulse of the moment: for she was craving an instant to herself, even though it were but in the next hall.

She quitted the grey parlor and approached the drawing-room. Not a sound came from it; and, believing it was empty, she opened the door and looked cautiously in.

Quite empty. The fire blazed, the chandelier was lighted, but nobody was enjoying the warmth or the light. From the inner room, however, came the sound of the piano, and the tones of Mr. Carlyle's voice. She recognized the chords of the music: they were those of the accompaniment to the song he had so loved when she sang it to him. Who was about to sing it to him now?

Lady Isabel stole across the drawing-room to the other door, which was ajar. Barbara was seated at the piano, and Mr. Carlyle stood by her, his arm on her chair, and bending his face on a level with hers, possibly to look at the music. So once had stolen, so once had peeped the unhappy Barbara, to hear this self-same song. *She* had been his wife then; she had craved and received his kisses when it was over. Their positions were reversed.

Barbara began. Her voice had not the brilliant power of Lady Isabel's, but it was a sweet and pleasant voice to listen to.

"When other lips and other hearts
Their tales of love shall tell,
In language whose excess imparts
The power they feel so well,
There may perhaps in such a scene
Some recollection be,
Of days that have as happy been—
And you'll remember me."

Days that had as happy been! Ay. *Did* he remember her? Did a thought of her, his first and best love, flit across him, as the words fell on his ear? Did a past vision of the time when she had sat there and sung it to him, arouse his heart to even momentary recollection?

Terribly, indeed, were their positions reversed; most terribly was she feeling it. And by whose act and will had the change been wrought? Barbara was now the cherished wife, East Lynne's mistress. And what was she? Not even the courted, welcomed guest of an hour, as Barbara had been; but an interloper; a criminal woman who had thrust herself into the house; her act, in doing so, not justifiable, her position a most false one. Was it right, even if she did succeed in remaining undiscovered, that she and Barbara should dwell in the same habitation, Mr. Carlyle being in it? Did she deem it to be right? No, she did not; but one act of ill doing entails more. These thoughts were passing through her mind as she stood there, listening to the song; stood there as one turned to stone, her throbbing temples pressed against the door's pillar.

The song was over, and Barbara turned to her husband, a whole world of love in her bright blue eyes. He laid his hand upon her head; Lady Isabel saw that, but she would not wait to see the caress that most probably followed it. She turned and crossed the room again, her hands clasped tightly on her bosom, her breath catching itself in hysterical sobs. Miss Carlyle was entering from the hall. They had not yet met, and Lady Isabel swept meekly past her with a hurried courtesy. Miss Carlyle spoke, but she dared not answer; to wait, would have been to betray herself.

Sunday came, and that was the worst of all. In the old East Lynne pew at St. Jude's, so conspicuous to the congregation, sat she, as in former times; no excuse dared she, the governess, make, to remain away. It was the first time she had entered an English Protestant church, since she had last sat in it, there, with Mr. Carlyle. Can you wonder that the fact alone, with all the terrible remembrances it brought in train, was sufficient to overwhelm her with emotion? She sat at the upper end now, with Lucy. Barbara occupied the place that had been hers, by the side of Mr. Carlyle.—Barbara there, in her own right, his wife; she severed from him forever and forever!

She scarcely raised her head; she tightened her thick veil over her face; she kept her spectacles bent toward the ground.—Lucy thought she must be crying; she had never seen any one so still at church before. Lucy was mistaken; tears came not to solace the bitter anguish of hopeless, self-condemning remorse. How she sat out the service she could not tell; she could not tell how she should sit out other services, as the Sunday came round. The congregation did not forget to stare at her. What an extraordinary looking governess Mrs. Carlyle had picked up!

They went out when it was over. Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle in advance; she, humbly following them with Lucy. She glanced aside at the tomb in the churchyard's corner, where moldered the remains of her father; and a yearning cry went forth from the very depth of her soul. "Oh, that I were laid there with him! Why did I come back again to East Lynne?"

Why, truly? But she had never thought that her cross would be so sharp as this.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AN M. P. FOR WEST LYNNE.

As this is not a history of the British constitution, it does not concern it to relate how or why West Lynne got into hot water with the House of Commons. The House threatened to disenfranchise it, and West Lynne, under the fear, went into mourning for its sins. The threat was not carried out; but one of the sitting members was unseated with ignominy, and set to the right about. Being considerably humiliated thereby, and in disgust with West Lynne, he retired accordingly, and a fresh writ was issued.—West Lynne then returned the Honorable Mr. Attley, a county nobleman's son; but he died in the very midst of his first session, and another writ had to be issued.

Of course the consideration now was, who should be the next lucky man fixed upon. All the notables within twenty miles were discussed, not excepting the bench of justices. Mr. Justice Hare? No! he was too uncompromising; would study his own will, but not that of West Lynne. Squire Pinner? He never made a speech in his life, and had not an idea beyond turnips and farming stock. Colonel Bethel? He had no money to spend upon an election. Sir John Dobede? He was too old. "By a good twenty years," laughed Sir John, himself. "But here we stand, like a pack of noodles, conning over the incapables, and passing by the right one," continued Sir John. "There's only one man amongst us fit to be our member."

"Who's that?" cried the meeting.

"Archibald Carlyle."

A pause of consternation—consternation at their collective forgetfulness; and then a loud murmur of approbation, approaching to a shout, filled the room. Archibald Carlyle. It should be no other.

"If we can get him," cried Sir John.—"He may decline, you know."

The best thing, all agreed, was to act promptly. A deputation, half the length of the street—its whole length, if you include the tag-rag and bobtail that attended behind—set off on the spur of the moment, to the office of Mr. Carlyle. They found that gentleman about to leave it for the evening, to return home to dinner; for, in the discussion of the all-important topic, the meeting had suffered time to run on to a late hour; those gentlemen who dined at a somewhat earlier one, had, for once in their lives, patiently allowed their dinners and stomachs to wait—which is saying a great deal for the patience of a justice.

Mr. Carlyle was taken by surprise.—"Make me your member?" he cried, merrily. "How do you know I should not sell you all?"

"We'll trust you, Carlyle. Too happy to do it."

"I am not sure I could spare the time," deliberated Mr. Carlyle.

"Now, Carlyle, you must remember that you avowed to me, no longer ago than last Christmas, your intention of going into parliament some time," struck in Mr. Justice Herbert. "You can't deny it."

"Some time!—yes," replied Mr. Carlyle; "but I did not say when. I have no thoughts of it yet awhile."

"You must allow us to put you in nomination, you must indeed, Mr. Carlyle.—There's nobody else fit for it. As good send a pig to the House as some of us."

"An extremely flattering reason for proposing to shift the honor upon me," laughed Mr. Carlyle.

"Well, you know what we mean, Carlyle; there's not a man in the whole country so suitable as you, search it to the extremity of its boundaries—you must know there is not."

"I don't know anything of the sort," returned Mr. Carlyle.

"At any rate we shall do it, for we have determined upon having you. When you walk into West Lynne to-morrow, you'll see the walls alive with placards, 'Carlyle for ever!'"

"Suppose you allow me until to-morrow to consider of it, and defer the garnishing of the walls a day later," said Mr. Carlyle, a serious tone peeping out in the midst of his jocularity.

"You do not fear the expenses?"

It was but a glance he returned in answer. As soon as the question had been put—it was stupid old Pinner who propounded it—they had felt how foolish it was. And indeed the cost would be a mere nothing were there no opposition.

"Come, decide now, Carlyle. Give us your promise."

"If I decide now, it will be in the negative," replied Mr. Carlyle. "It is a question that demands consideration. Give me till to-morrow for that, and it is possible that I may accede to your request."

This was the best that could be made of him, and the deputation backed out, and, as nothing more could be done, departed to their several dinner tables. Mr. Dill, who had been present, remained rubbing his hands with satisfaction, and casting admiring glances at Mr. Carlyle.

"What's the matter, Dill?" asked the latter; "you look as though you were pleased at this movement, and assured that I should accept it."

"And so you will, Mr. Archibald. And as to the looking pleased, there's not a man, woman, or child in West Lynne who won't do that."

"Don't make too sure, Dill."

"Of which, sir—of your becoming our member, or of the people looking pleased."

"Of either," laughed Mr. Carlyle.

He quitted the office to walk home, revolving the proposition as he did so. That he had long thought of sometime entering parliament was certain, though no definite period of the "when" had fixed itself in his mind. He saw not why he should confine his days entirely to toil, to the work of his calling. Pecuniary considerations did not require it, for his realized property, combined with the fortune brought by Barbara, was quite sufficient to meet expenses, according to their present style of living. Not that he had the least intention of giving up his business; it was honorable (as he conducted it) and lucrative, and he really liked it. He would not have been condemned to lead an idle life for the world; but there was no necessity for his being always at it. Mr. Dill made as good a principal as he did, and—if length of service and experience might be counted—a better one. He could safely be left to manage during the time it would be necessary for him, Mr. Carlyle, to be in London. He would rather represent West Lynne than any other spot on the face of the earth, no matter what might be the other's importance; and, as West Lynne was now in want of a member, perhaps his opportunity had come. That he would make a good and efficient public servant, he believed; his talents were superior, his oratory persuasive, and he had the gift of a true and honest spirit. That he would have the interest of West Lynne at heart was certain, and he knew that he should serve his constituents to the very best of his power and ability. They knew it also.

Before Mr. Carlyle had reached East Lynne, he had decided that it should be.

It was a fine spring evening. The lilac was in bloom, the hedges and trees were clothed in their early green, and all things seemed full of promise. Even Mr. Carlyle's heart was rejoicing in the prospect opened to it; he was sure he should like public life; but in the sanguine moments of realization or of hope, some dark shade will step in to mar the brightness.

Barbara stood at the drawing-room window watching for him. Not in her was the dark shade; her dress was a marvel of vanity and prettiness, and she had chosen to place on her fair hair a dainty head-dress of lace—as if her hair required any such ornament! She waltzed up to Mr. Carlyle when he entered, and saucily held up her face, the light of love dancing in her bright blue eyes.

"What do you want?" he provokingly asked, putting his hands behind him and letting her stand there.

"Oh, well—if you won't say good evening to me, I have a great mind to say you should not kiss me for a week, Archibald."

He laughed. "Who would be most punished by that?" whispered he.

Barbara pouted her pretty lips, and the tears positively came into her eyes. "Which is as much as to say it would be no punishment to you. Archibald, *don't* you care for me?"

He threw his arms around her, and clasped her to his heart, taking plenty of kisses then. "You know whether I care or not," he fondly whispered.

But now, will you believe that that unfortunate Lady Isabel had been a witness to this? Well, it was only what his greeting to her had once been. Her pale face flushed scarlet, and she glided out of the room again as softly as she had entered it. They had not seen her. Mr. Carlyle drew his wife to the window, and stood there, his arm round her waist.

"Barbara, what would you say to living in London for a few months out of the twelve?"

"London? I am very happy where I am. Why should you ask me that? You are not going to live in London?"

"I am not sure of that. I think I am for a portion of the year. I have had an offer made me this afternoon, Barbara."

She looked at him, wondering what he meant—wondering whether he was serious. An offer? What sort of an offer? Of what nature could it be?

He smiled at her perplexity. "Should you like to see M. P. attached to my name? West Lynne wants me to become its member."

A pause to take in the news; a sudden rush of color, and then she gleefully clasped her hands round his arm, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

"Oh, Archibald, how glad I am! I knew how you were appreciated, and you will be appreciated more and more. This is right; it was not well for you to remain what you are for life—a private individual, a country lawyer."

"I am perfectly contented with my lot, Barbara," he seriously said. "I am too busy to be otherwise."

"I know that; were you but a laboring man, toiling daily for the bread you eat, you would be contented, feeling that you were fulfilling your appointed duty to the utmost," she impulsively said; "but, Archibald, can, you not still be a busy man at West Lynne although you do become its representative?"

"If I could not, I should never accept the honor, Barbara. For some few months of the year I must of necessity be in town; but Dill is an efficient substitute, and I can run down for a week or so between times. Part of Saturday, Sunday, and part of Monday I can always pass here if I please. Of course these changes have their drawbacks, as well as their advantages."

"Where would be the drawbacks in this?" she interrupted.

"Well," smiled Mr. Carlyle, "in the first place, I suppose you could not always be with me."

Her hands fell—her color failed. "Oh, Archibald!"

"If I do become this member, I must go up to town as soon as elected; and I don't think it will do for my little wife to be quitting her home to travel about just now."

Barbara's face wore a very blank look. She could not dissent from Mr. Carlyle's reasoning.

"And you must remain in London to the end of the session, while I am here! Separated! Archibald," she passionately added, while the tears gushed into her eyes. "I could not *live* without you."

"Then what is to be done? Must I decline it?"

"Decline it! Of course not! I know we are looking on the dark side of things. I can go very well with you for a month—perhaps two."

"You think so?"

"I am sure so. And, mind, you must not encourage mamma to talk me out of it. Archibald," she continued, resting her head upon his breast, her sweet face turned up beseechingly to his, "you would rather have me with you, would you not?"

He bent his own down upon it. "What do you think about it, my darling?"

Once more—an inopportune moment for her to enter—Lady Isabel. Barbara heard her this time, and sprang away from her husband. Mr. Carlyle turned round at the movement, and saw Madame Vine. She came forward, her lips ashy, her voice subdued.

Six months now had she been at East Lynne, and had hitherto escaped detection. Time and familiarity render us accustomed to most things, to danger among the rest; and she had almost ceased to fear recognition, living—so far as that point went—far more peaceably than she had done at first. She and the children were upon the best of terms. She had greatly endeared herself to them; she loved them, and they loved her—perhaps nature was asserting her own hidden claims.

She felt very anxious about William—he seemed to grow weaker, and she determined to make her fears known to Mr. Carlyle.

She quitted the parlor. She had heard Mr. Carlyle come in. Crossing the hall, she tapped softly at the drawing-room door, and then as softly entered. It was the moment of Mr. Carlyle's fond greeting to his wife. They stood together, heedless of her.

Gliding out again, she paced the hall, her hands pressed upon her beating heart. How *dared* that heart rise up in sharp rebellion at these witnessed tokens of love? Was Barbara not his wife? had she not a legal claim to all his tenderness? Who was she, that she should resent them in her jealousy? What, though they had once been hers, hers only; had she not signed and sealed her own forfeit of them, and so made room for Barbara?

Back to the grey parlor, there she stood,

her elbow on the mantel-piece, her eyes hidden by her hand. Thus she remained for some minutes, and Lucy thought how sad she looked.

But Lucy felt hungry, and was casting longing glances to the tea-table. She wondered how long her governess meant to keep it waiting. "Madame Vine," cried she, presently, "don't you know that tea is ready?"

This caused Madame Vine to raise her eyes. They fell on the pale boy at her feet. She made no immediate answer, only placed her hand on Lucy's shoulder.

"Oh, Lucy dear, I—I have many sorrows to bear."

"The tea will warm you, and there is some nice jam," was Miss Lucy's offered consolation.

"Their greeting, tender as it may be, is surely over by this time," thought Lady Isabel, an expression something like mockery curving her lips. "I will venture again."

Only to see him with his wife's face on his breast, and his lips bent upon it. But they had heard her this time, and she had to advance, in spite of her spirit of misery and her whitened features.

"Would you be so good, sir, as to come and look at William?" she asked, in a low tone, of Mr. Carlyle.

"Certainly."

"What for?" interjected Barbara.

"He looks so very ill. I do not like his looks. I am fearing whether he can be worse than we have thought."

They went to the grey parlor, all three of them. Mr. Carlyle was in first, and had taken a long, silent look at William before the others entered.

"What is he doing on the floor?" exclaimed Barbara, in her astonishment. "He should not lie on the floor, Madame Vine."

"He lays himself down there at the dusk hour, and I cannot get him up again. I try to persuade him to use the sofa, but it is of no use."

"The floor will not hurt him," said Mr. Carlyle. *This* was the dark shade: his boy's failing health.

William opened his eyes. "Who's that? papa?"

"Don't you feel well, William?"

"Oh, yes, I'm very well; but I'm tired."

"Why do you lie down here?"

"I like lying here. Papa, that pretty white rabbit of mine is dead."

"Indeed. Suppose you get up and tell me all about it."

"I don't know about it myself yet," said William, slowly rising. "The gardener told Lucy when she was out just now: I did not go; I was tired. He said"—

"What has tired you?" interrupted Mr. Carlyle, taking hold of the boy's hand.

"Oh, nothing. I am always tired."

"Do you tell Mr. Wainwright that you are tired?"

"No. Why should I tell him? I wish he would not order me to take that nasty medicine, that cod liver oil."

"But it is to make you strong, my boy."

"It makes me sick. I always feel sick after it, papa. Madame Vine says I ought to have cream. That would be nice."

"Cream?" repeated Mr. Carlyle, turning his eyes on Madame Vine.

"I have known cream to do a vast deal of good in a case like William's," she observed. "I believe that no better medicine can be given; that it has, in fact, no substitute."

"It can be tried," said Mr. Carlyle.

"Pray give your orders, Madame Vine, for anything you think may be beneficial to him," Mrs. Carlyle added. "You have had more experience with children than I.—Joyce"——

"What does Wainwright say?" interrupted Mr. Carlyle, speaking to his wife, his tone low.

"I do not always see him when he comes, Archibald. Madame Vine does, I believe."

"Oh, dear!" cried Lucy, "can't we have tea? I want some bread and jam."

Mr. Carlyle turned round, smiled, and nodded at her. "Patience is good for little girls, Miss Lucy. Would you like some bread and jam, my boy?"

William shook his head. "I can't eat jam. I am only thirsty."

Mr. Carlyle cast a long and intent look at him, and then left the room. Lady Isabel followed him, her thoughts full of her ailing child.

"Do you think him very ill, sir?" she whispered.

"I think he looks so. What does Mr. Wainwright say?"

"He says nothing to me. I have not inquired his true condition. Until to-night it did not occur to me that there was any apprehension."

"Does he look so much worse to night?"

"Not any worse than customary. Latterly he has looked just like this in an evening. It was a remark of Hannah's that aroused my alarm: she thinks he's on the road to death. What can we do to save him?"

She clasped her hands as she spoke, in the intensity of her emotion. She almost forgot, as they stood there together talking of the welfare of the child, their child, that he was no longer her husband. Almost, not quite, utterly impossible would it be for her wholly to forget the dreadful present. Neither he nor the child could belong to her in this world.

A strange rising of the throat in her wild despair, a meek courtesy, as she turned from him, his last words ringing in her ears. "I shall call in further advice for him, Madame Vine."

William was clinging round Mrs. Carlyle, in a coaxing attitude, when she re-entered the grey parlor. "I know what I could eat, mamma, if you'd let me have it," cried he, in answer to her remonstrance that he must eat something.

"What could you eat?"

"Some cheese."

"Cheese! Cheese with tea!" laughed Mrs. Carlyle.

"For the last week or two he has fancied strange things, the effect of a diseased appetite," exclaimed Madame Vine. "But if I allow them to be brought in he barely tastes them."

"I am sure, mamma, I could eat some cheese now," said William.

"You may have it," answered Mrs. Carlyle.

As she turned to leave the room, the impatient knock and ring of a visitor was heard. Barbara wondered who could be arriving at that, their dinner hour. Sailing majestically into the hall, her lips compressed, her aspect threatening, came Miss Carlyle.

Now, it turned out that Miss Corny had been standing at her own window, grimly eyeing the ill doings of the street, from the fine housemaid opposite, who was enjoying a flirting interview with the baker, to the ragged urchins pitchpoling in the gutter and the dust. And there she caught sight of the string, justices and others, who came flowing out of the office of Mr. Carlyle. So many of them were they that Miss Corny involuntarily thought of a conjurer flinging flowers out of a hat—the faster they come, the more it seems there are to come.—"What on earth is up?" cried Miss Corny, pressing her nose flat against the pane, that she might see better.

They filed off, some one way, some another. Miss Carlyle's curiosity was keener than her appetite, for she stayed on the watch, although just informed that her dinner was served. Presently Mr. Carlyle appeared, and she knocked at the window with her knuckles. He did not hear it; he had turned off at a quick pace toward home. Miss Corny's temper rose.

The clerks came out next, one after another; and the last was Mr. Dill. He was less hurried than Mr. Carlyle had been, and heard Miss Corny's signal.

"What, in the name of wonder, did all that stream of people want at the office?" began she when Mr. Dill had entered in obedience to it.

"That was the deputation, Miss Cornelia."

"What deputation?"

"The deputation to Mr. Archibald. They want him to become their new member."

"Member of what?" cried she, not guessing at the actual meaning.

"Of Parliament, Miss Corny; to replace Mr. Attley. The gentlemen came to solicit him to be put in nomination."

"Solicit a donkey!" irascibly uttered Miss Corny, for the tidings did not meet her approbation. "Did Archibald turn them out again?"

"He gave them no direct answer, ma'am. He will consider of it between now and to-morrow morning."

"*Consider* of it!" shrieked she. "Why, he'd never, never be such a flat as to comply. He go into Parliament! What next!"

"Why should he not, Miss Corny? I'm sure I should be proud to see him there."

Miss Corney gave a sniff. "You are proud of things more odd than even, John Dill. Remember that fine shirt-front!—What has become of it? Is it laid up in lavender?"

"Not exactly in lavender, Miss Corny. It lies in the drawer; for I have never liked to put it on since, after what you said."

"Why don't you sell it at half price, and buy a couple of good useful ones with the money?" returned she, tartly. "Better that than keep the foppish thing as a witness of your folly. Perhaps he'll be buying embroidered fronts next, if he goes into that idle do-nothing House of Commons. I'd rather enter myself for six months at the treadmill."

"Oh, Miss Corny! I don't think you have well considered it. It's a great honor, and worthy of him. He will be elevated above us all, as it were, and he deserves to be."

"Elevate him on a weathercock!" raged Miss Corny. "There, you may go. I've heard quite enough."

Brushing past the old gentleman, leaving him to depart or not, as he might please, Miss Carlyle strode upstairs, flung on her shawl and bonnet, and strode down again. Her servant looked considerably surprised, and addressed her as she crossed the hall.

"Your dinner, ma'am!" he ventured to say.

"What's my dinner to you?" returned Miss Corny, in her wrath. "You have had yours."

Away she strode. And thus it happened that she was at East Lynne almost as soon as Mr. Carlyle.

"Where's Archibald?" began she, without ceremony, the moment she saw Barbara.

"He is here. Is anything the matter?"

Mr. Carlyle, hearing the voice, came out, and she pounced upon him with her tongue.

"What's this about your becoming the new member for West Lynne?"

"West Lynne wishes it," said Mr. Carlyle. "Sit down, Cornelia."

"Sit down yourself," retorted she, keeping on her feet. "I want my questions answered. *Of course* you will decline."

"On the contrary, I have made up my mind to accept."

Miss Corny untied the strings of her bonnet, and flung them behind her.

"Have you counted the cost?" she asked, and there was something sepulchral in her solemn tone.

"I have given it consideration, Cornelia; both as regards money and time. The expenses will be not worth naming, should there be no opposition. And if there is"——

"Ay!" groaned Miss Corny. "If there is?"

"Well, I am not without a few hundred to spare for the plaything," he said, turning upon her the good-humored light of his fine countenance.

Miss Carlyle emitted some dismal moans.

"That ever I should have lived to see this day! To hear money talked of as though it were dirt. And what's to become of your business!" she sharply added. "Is that to be let run to rack and ruin, while you are kicking up your heels in that wicked London, under plea of being at the House night after night?"

"Cornelia," he gravely said, "were I dead, Dill could carry on the business just as well as it is being carried on now. I might go into a foreign country for seven years, and come back to find the business as flourishing as ever, for Dill could keep it together. And even were the business to fall off—though I tell you it will not do so—I am independent of it."

Miss Carlyle faced tartly round upon Barbara.

"Have you been setting him on to this?"

"I think he had made up his mind before he spoke to me. But," added Barbara, in her truth, "I urged him to accept it."

"Oh, you did! Nicely moped and miserable you'll be here, if he goes to London for months upon the stretch! You did not think of that, perhaps."

"But he would not leave me here," said Barbara, her eyelashes becoming wet at the thought, as she unconsciously moved to her husband's side. "He would take me with him."

Miss Carlyle made a pause, and looked at them alternately.

"Is that decided?" she asked.

"Of course it is," laughed Mr. Carlyle willing to joke the subject and his sister into good humor.

"Would you wish to separate man and wife, Cornelia?"

She made no reply. She rapidly tied her bonnet-strings, the ribbon trembling ominously in her fingers.

"You are not going, Cornelia! You must stay to dinner, now you are here—it is ready—and we will talk this further over afterward."

"This has been dinner enough for me for one day," spoke she, putting on her gloves. "That I should have lived to see my father's son throw up his business, and change himself into a lazy, stuck-up Parliament-man!"

"Do stay and dine with us, Cornelia: I think I can subdue your prejudices, if you will let me talk to you."

"If you wanted to talk to me about it, why did you not come in when you left the office?" cried Miss Corny, in a greater amount of wrath than she had shown yet. And there's no doubt that, in his not having done so, lay one of the sore points.

"I did not think of it," said Mr. Carlyle. "I should have come in and told you of it to-morrow morning."

"I dare say you would!" she ironically answered. "Good evening to you both."

And, in spite of their persuasions, she quitted the house, and went stalking down the avenue.

Two or three days more, and the address of Mr. Carlyle, to the inhabitants of West Lynne, appeared in the local papers, while the walls and posts convenient were embellished with various colored placards: "Vote for Carlyle." "Carlyle forever!"

Wonders never cease. Surprises are the lot of man; but, perhaps a greater surprise had never been experienced, by those who knew what was what, than when it went forth to the world that Sir Francis Levison had converted himself from—from what he was—into a red-hot politician.

Had he been offered the post of prime minister? Or did his conscience smite him, as was the case with a certain gallant captain renowned in song? Neither the one nor the other. The simple fact was, that Sir Francis Levison was in a state of pecuniary embarrassment, and required something to prop him up—some snug sinecure—plenty to get, and nothing to do.

Patch himself up he must. But how? He had tried the tables, but luck was against him; he made a desperate venture on the turf, a grand *coup* that would have set him on his legs for some time; but the venture turned out the wrong way, and Sir Francis was a defaulter. He began then to think there was nothing for it but to drop into some nice government nest, where, as I have told you, there would be plenty to get and nothing to do. Any place with much to do would not suit him, or he it; he was too empty-headed for work requiring talent; you may have remarked that a man given to Sir Francis Levison's pursuits generally is.

He dropped into something good, or that promised good—nothing less than the secretaryship to Lord Headthelot's, who swayed the ministers in the Upper House. But that he was a connection of Lord Headthelots, he never would have obtained it, and very dubiously the minister consented to try him. Of course, a condition was, that he should enter Parliament at the first opportunity, his vote to be at the disposal of the ministry—rather a shaky ministry—and supposed, by some, to be on its last legs. And this brings us to the present time.

In a handsome drawing-room in Eaton Square, one sunny afternoon, sat a lady, young and handsome. Her eyes were of violet blue, her hair was auburn, her complexion delicate; but there was a stern look of anger, amounting to sullenness, on her well-formed features, and her pretty foot was beating the carpet in passionate impatience. It was Lady Levison.

The doings of the past had been coming home to her for some time now—past doings, be they good or be they ill, are sure to come home, one day or another, and bring their fruits with them.

In the years past—many years past now—Francis Levison had lost his heart—or whatever the thing might be that, with him, did duty for one—to Blanche Challoner. He had despised her once to Lady Isabel—as Lord Thomas says in the old ballad; but that was done to suit his own purpose, for he had never, at any period, cared for Lady Isabel as he had cared for Blanche. He gained her affections in secret, and in secret they engaged themselves to each other. Blanche's sister, Lydia Challoner, two years older than herself, suspected it, and taxed Blanche with it. Blanche, true to her compact of keeping it a secret, denied it with many protestations. "*She* did not care for Captain Levison; rather disliked him, in fact." "So much the better," was Miss Challoner's reply, for she had no respect for Captain Levison, and deemed him an unlikely man to marry.

Years went on, and poor, unhappy Blanche Challoner remained faithful to her love.

He played fast and loose with her—professing attachment for her in secret, and visiting at the house; perhaps he feared an outbreak from her, an exposure that might be anything but pleasant, did he throw off all relations between them. Blanche summed up her courage and spoke to him, urging the marriage: she had not yet glanced at the fear that his intention of marrying her (had he ever possessed such) was over. Bad men are always cowards. Sir Francis shrank from an explanation, and so far forgot honor as to murmur some indistinct promise that the wedding should be speedy.

Lydia Challoner had married, and been left a widow, well off. She was Mrs. Waring; and at her house resided Blanche, for the girls were orphans. Blanche was beginning to show symptoms of her nearly thirty years: not the years, but the long-continued disappointment, the heart-burnings, were telling upon her. Her hair was thin, her face was pinched, her form had lost its roundness. "Marry *her*, indeed!" scoffed, to himself, Sir Francis Levison.

There came to Mrs. Waring's, upon a Christmas visit, a younger sister, Alice Challoner, a fair girl of twenty years. She resided generally with an aunt in the country. Far more beautiful, was she, than Blanche had ever been; and Francis Levison, who had not seen her since she was a child, fell—as she would have called it—in love with her. Love! He became her shadow; he whispered sweet words in her ear; he turned her head giddy with its own vanity, and he offered her marriage. She accepted him, and preparations for the ceremony immediately began. Sir Francis urged speed, and Alice was nothing loth.

And what of Blanche? Blanche was stunned. A despairing stupor took possession of her; and, when she awoke from it, desperation set in. She insisted upon an interview with Sir Francis; and evade it he could not, though he tried hard.

Will it be believed that he denied the past? that he met with mocking suavity her indignant reminders of what had been between them? "Love? Marriage? Nonsense! her fancy had been too much at work." Finally, he defied her to prove that he had regarded her with more than ordinary friendship, or had ever hinted at such a thing as a union.

She could not prove it. She had not so much as a scrap of paper written on by him; she had not a single friend or enemy to come forward and testify that they had heard him breathe to her a word of love. He had been too wary for that. Moreover, there were her own solemn protestations to her sister Lydia that there *was not* anything between her and Francis Levison; who would believe her if she veered round now, and avowed those protestations were false? No; she found that she was in a sinking ship, one there was no chance of saving.

But one chance she did determine to try—an appeal to Alice. Blanche Challoner's eyes were suddenly and rudely opened to the badness of the man, and she was aware now how thoroughly unfit he was to become the husband of her sister. It struck her that only misery could result from the union, and that, if possible, Alice should be saved from entering upon it. Would she have married him herself, then? Yes. But it was a different thing for that fair, fresh, young Alice: she had not wasted her life's best years in waiting for him.

When the family had gone to rest, and the house was quiet, Blanche Challoner proceeded to her sister's bedroom. Alice had not begun to undress; she was sitting in a comfortable chair before the fire, her feet on the fender, reading a love-letter from Sir Francis.

"Alice, I am come to tell you a story," said she, quietly. "Will you hear it?"

"In a minute. Stop a bit," repeated Alice. She finished the perusal of the letter, put it aside, and then spoke again. "What did you say, Blanche? A story?"

Blanche nodded. "Several years ago, there was a fair young girl, none too rich, in our station of life. A gentleman, who was none too rich either, sought and gained her love. He could not marry: he was not rich, I say. They loved on in secret, hoping for better times, she wearing out her years and her heart. Oh, Alice! I cannot describe to you how she loved him—how she continued to love him up to this moment. Through evil report she clung to him tenaciously and tenderly as the vine clings to its trellis, for the world spoke ill of him."

"Who was the young lady?" interrupted Alice. "Is this a fable of romance, Blanche, or a real history?"

"A real history. I knew her. All those years—years and years, I say—he kept leading her on to love, letting her think that his love was hers. In the course of time he succeeded to a fortune, and the bar to their marriage was over. He was abroad when he came into it, but returned home at once; their intercourse was renewed, and her fading heart woke up once more to life. Still, the marriage did not come on: he said nothing of it, and she spoke to him. Very soon, now, should it be, was his answer, and she continued to live on—in hope."

"Go on, Blanche," cried Alice, who had grown interested in the tale, never suspecting it could bear a personal interest.

"Yes, I will go on. Would you believe, Alice, that almost immediately after this last promise, he saw one whom he fancied he should like better, and asked her to be his wife, forsaking the one to whom he was bound by every tie of honor—repudiating all that had been between them, even his own words and promises?"

"How disgraceful! Were they married?"

"They are to be. Would you have such a man?"

"I!" returned Alice, quite indignant at the question. "It is not likely that I would."

"That man, Alice, is Sir Francis Levison."

Alice Challoner gave a start, and her face became scarlet. "How dare you say so, Blanche? It is not true. Who was the girl, pray? She must have traduced him."

"She has not traduced him," was the subdued answer. "The girl was myself."

An awkward pause. "I know," cried Alice, throwing back her head resentfully. "He told me I might expect something of this—that you had fancied him in love with you, and were angry because he had chosen me."

Blanche turned upon her with streaming eyes; she could no longer control her emotion. "Alice, my sister, all the pride is gone out of me; all the reticence that woman loves to observe as to her wrongs and her inward feelings, I have broken for you this night. As sure as that there is heaven above us, I have told you but the truth. Until you came, I was engaged to Francis Levison."

An unnatural scene ensued. Blanche, provoked at Alice's rejection of her words, told all the ill she knew, or had heard, of the man; she dwelt upon his conduct with regard to Lady Isabel Carlyle, his heartless after-treatment of that unhappy lady. Alice was passionate and fiery. She professed not to believe a word of her sister's wrongs, and as to the other stories, they were no affairs of hers, she said: what had she to do with his past life?

But Alice Challoner did believe; her sister's earnestness and distress, as she told the tale carried conviction with them. She did not very much care for Sir Francis; he was not entwined round her heart, as he was round Blanche's; but she was dazzled with the prospect of so good a settlement in life, and she would not give him up. If Blanche broke her heart—why, she must break it. But she need not have mixed taunts and jeers with her refusal to believe; she need not have *triumphed* openly over Blanche. Was it well done? Was it the work of an affectionate sister? As we sow, so shall we reap. She married Sir Francis Levison, leaving Blanche to her broken heart, or to any other calamity that might grow out of the injustice. And there sat Lady Levison now, her three years of marriage having served to turn her love for Francis into contempt and hate.

A little boy, two years old, the only child of the marriage, was playing about the room. His mother took no notice of him; she was buried in all-absorbing thought; thought which caused her lips to contract and her brow to scowl. Sir Francis entered, his attitude lounging, his air listless. Lady Levison roused herself, but no pleasant manner of tone was hers, as she set herself to address him.

"I want some money," she said.

"So do I," he answered.

An impatient stamp of the foot and a haughty toss. "And I must have it. I *must*. I told you yesterday that I must. Do you suppose I can go on, without a sixpence of ready money, day after day?"

"Do you suppose it is any use to put yourself in this fury?" retorted Sir Francis. "A dozen times a week do you bother me for money, and a dozen times do I tell you I have got none. I have got none for myself. You may as well ask that baby for money, as ask me."

"I wish he had never been born!" passionately uttered Lady Levison. "Unless he had had a different father."

That the last sentence, and the bitter scorn of its tone, would have provoked a reprisal from Sir Francis, his flashing countenance betrayed. But at that moment a servant entered the room.

"I beg your pardon, sir. That man Brown forced his way into the hall, and"—

"I can't see him, I won't see him," interrupted Sir Francis, backing to the farthest corner of the room, in what looked very like abject terror, as if he had completely lost his presence of mind. Lady Levison's lip curled.

"We got rid of him, sir, after a dreadful deal of trouble, I was about to say, but while the door was open in the dispute, Mr. Meredith entered. He has gone into the library, sir, and he vows he wont stir until he sees you, whether you are sick or well."

A moment's pause, a half-muttered oath, and then Sir Francis quitted the room. The servant retired, and Lady Levison caught up the child.

"Oh, Franky dear," she wailed forth, burying her face in his warm neck, "I'd leave him for good and all, if I dared; but I fear he might keep you."

Now, the secret was, that for the last three days Sir Francis had been desperately ill, obliged to keep his bed, and could see nobody; his life depending upon quiet. Such was the report, or something equivalent to it, which had gone in to Lord Headthelot (or, rather to the official office, for that renowned chief was, himself, out of town); it had also been delivered to all callers at Sir Francis Levison's house. The real truth being that Sir Francis was as well as you or I, but, from something which had transpired touching one of his numerous debts, did not dare to show himself. That morning the matter had been arranged, patched up for a time.

"My stars, Levison!" began Mr. Meredith, who was a whipper-in of the ministry, "what a row there is about you! Why, you look as well as ever you were!"

"A great deal better to-day," coughed Sir Francis.

"To think that you should have chosen the present moment for skulking? Here have I been dancing attendance at your door, day after day, in a state of incipient fever, enough to put me into a real one, and could neither get admitted nor a letter taken up. I should have blown the house up to-day and got in amidst the flying debris. By the way, are you and my lady *two*, just now?"

"Two?" growled Sir Francis.

"She was stepping into her carriage yesterday when they turned me from the door, and I made inquiry of her. Her ladyship's answer was, that she knew nothing either of Sir Francis or his illness."

"Her ladyship is subject to flights of distemper," chafed Sir Francis. "What desperate need have you of me, just now?—Headthelot's away and there's nothing doing."

"Nothing doing up here; a deal too much doing somewhere else. Attley's seat's in the market."

"Well?"

"And you ought to have been down there about it three or four days ago. Of course you must step into it."

"Of course I shan't," returned Sir Francis. "To represent West Lynne will not suit me."

"Not suit you! West Lynne! Why, of all places, it is most suitable. It's close to your own property."

"If you call ten miles close. I shall not put up for West Lynne, Meredith."

"Headthelot came up this morning," said Mr. Meredith.

The information somewhat aroused Sir Francis. "Headthelot! What brings him back?"

"You. I tell you, Levison, there's a hot row. Headthelot expected you would be at West Lynne days past, and he has come up in an awful rage. Every additional vote we can count in the House is worth its weight in gold; and you, he says, are allowing West Lynne to slip through your fingers! You must start for it at once, Levison."

Sir Francis mused. Had the alternative been given to him, he would have preferred to represent a certain warm place under ground rather than West Lynne. But, to quit Headthelot, and the snug post he anticipated, would be ruin irretrievable; nothing short of outlawry or the Queen's prison. It was awfully necessary to get his threatened person into Parliament, and he began to turn over in his mind whether he *could* bring himself to make further acquaintance with West Lynne. "The thing must have blown over for good by this time," was the result of his cogitations, unconsciously speaking aloud.

"I can understand your reluctance to appear at West Lynne," cried Mr. Meredith; "the scene, unless I mistake, of that notorious affair of yours. But private feelings must give way to public interests; and the best thing you can do is to *start*. Headthelot is angry enough as it is. He says, had you been down at first, as you ought to have been, you would have slipped in without opposition; but now there'll be a contest."

Sir Francis looked up sharply. "A contest? Who is going to stand the funds?"

"Pshaw! As if we should let funds be any barrier! Have you heard who was in the field?"

"No," was the apathetic answer.

"Carlyle."

"Carlyle!" uttered Sir Francis, startled. "Oh, by George, though! I can't stand against him."

"Well, there's the alternative. If you can't, Thornton will."

"I should run no chance. West Lynne would not elect me in preference to him. I'm not sure, indeed, that West Lynne would have me in any case."

"Nonsense! you know our interest there. Government put in Attley, and it can put in you. Yes, or no, Levison?"

"Yes," answered Sir Francis.

An hour's time, and Sir Francis Levison went forth. On his way to be conveyed to West Lynne? Not yet. He turned his steps toward Scotland Yard. In considerably less than another hour, the following telegram, marked "Secret," went down from the head office to the superintendent of police at West Lynne:

"Is Otway Bethel at West Lynne? If not, where is he? and when will he be returning to it?"

It elicited a prompt answer.

"Otway Bethel is not at West Lynne.—Supposed to be in Norway. Movements uncertain."

(To be continued in our next.)

COMING BACK?

You are coming back soon! Yes, coming back. But who ever came back and found things unchanged? Stray along the streets of your native town, you will find a change. Here and there a house missing or a new one in its place. Wander out to the old farm-houses, embowered in green shade trees and wild-rose bushes. Do you not miss a tree here and a rosebush there, the flower-beds changed and altered? Enter the house, sit down in the familiar room. Find you it changed? Ah, yes! There is a picture missing from the wall, a sweet face from the household band; all things are changed, and you most of all. Call up before you the forms and faces of those you loved in the beautiful past—can you succeed? Ah, no! 'tis a pale phantom that you hug to your breast. Was it wise in you, this coming back?

Nothing on this earth can make up for the separation between those we love. They may meet you again; but they can never be as they were; there is a void, a change somewhere.

"Long absence," says a writer, "like a great misfortune, has in itself a recoiling power." You may go away poor and unknown, and come back with the wealth of fame upon your brow, the golden bowl of fortune in your grasp, and the honors of the world resting on you; but the power to enjoy your laurels may have perished, and all that would have made it sweet be turned to bitterness and blight. Alas! you have lost more than you have gained! "What matters it if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" There are more soul losses besides that of intemperance; losses that no earthly prosperity ever can make up; losses made more melancholy than any wreck of material fortune, and it is these losses that make "coming back" so sad a thing.

SHAKING HANDS.

A genial writer on things odd, thus discourses on that funniest and most characteristic of civilized customs, hand-shaking:—

The *pump-handle* is the first which deserves notice. It is executed by taking a friend's hand and working it up and down through an arc of fifty degrees, for about a minute and a half. To have its nature, force, and character, this shake should be performed with a fair and steady motion. No attempt should be made to give it grace, and still less variety, as the few instances in which the latter has been tried have uniformly resulted in dislocating the shoulder of the person on whom it has been attempted. On the contrary, persons who are partial to the *pump-handle* shake should be at some pains to give an equable, tranquil movement to the operation, which should on no account be continued after perspiration on the part of your friend has commenced.

The *pendulum* shake may be mentioned next, as being somewhat similar in character: but moving, as the name indicates, in horizontal, instead of perpendicular direction. It is executed by sweeping your hand horizontally towards your friend's, and after the junction is effected, rowing with it from one side to the other, according to the pleasure of the parties. The only caution in its use which needs particularly to be given, is not to insist on performing it in a plane strictly parallel to the horizon. You may observe a person that has been educated to the *pump-handle* shake, and another that has brought home the *pendulum* from a foreign voyage. They met, joined hands, and attempted to put them in motion. They were neither of them feeble men. One endeavored to pump, and the other to pendle; their faces reddened; the drops stood on their forehead; and it was at last a pleasant illustration of the doctrine of forces to see their heads slanting in an exact diagonal, in which line they ever after shook; but it was plain to see there was no cordiality in it, and as is usually the case with such compromises, both parties were discontented.

The *tourniquet* shake is the next in importance. It derives its name from the instrument made use of by surgeons to stop the circulation of the blood in the limb about to be amputated. It is performed by clasping the hand of your friend as far as you can in your own, and then contracting the muscles of your thumb, fingers, and palm, till you have induced any degree of compression you may propose in the hand of your friend. Particular care ought to be taken, if your hand is as hard and as big as a *frying-pan*, and that of your friend as small and soft as a maiden's, not to make use of the *tourniquet* shake to a degree that it will shake the small bones of the wrist out of their places. It is seldom safe to apply it to gouty persons. A hearty young friend who had pursued the study of geology, and acquired an unusual hardness and strength of hand and wrist by the use of the hammer, on returning from a scientific excursion, gave his gouty uncle the *tourniquet* shake with such severity as had well-nigh reduced the old gentleman's fingers to powder; for which my friend had the pleasure of being disinherited, as soon as his uncle's fingers got well enough to hold a pen.

The *cordial grapple* is a shake of some interest. It is a hearty, boisterous shake of your friend's hand, accompanied with moderate pressure and loud acclamations of welcome. It is an excellent traveling shake, and well adapted to make friends. It is indiscriminately performed.

The *Peter Grievous* touch is opposed to the *cordial grapple*. It is a passive, tranquil junction, followed by a mild subsultory motion, a cast-down look, and, at the same time, an inarticulate inquiry after your friend's health.

The *prude major* and *prude minor* are nearly monopolized by ladies. They cannot be accurately described, but are constantly to be noticed in practice. They never extend beyond the fingers; and the *prude major* allows you to touch them only down to the second joint; the *prude minor* allows you the whole of the finger. Considerable skill may be shown in performing them with nice variations; such as extending the left instead of the right, or stretching a new glossy kid glove over the finger you extend.

A SEA ABOVE THE SKY.

This belief is curiously illustrated by two legendary stories, preserved by Gervase of Tillbury:—

"One Sunday the people of a village in England were coming out of church on a thick cloudy day, when they saw the anchor of a ship hooked to one of the tombstones; the cable, which was tightly stretched, hanging down from the air. The people were astonished, and while they were consulting about it, suddenly they saw the rope move as though some one labored to pull up the anchor. The anchor, however, still held fast to the stone, and a great noise was suddenly heard in the air, like the shouting of sailors. Presently a sailor was seen sliding down the cable for the purpose of unfixing the anchor; and when he had just loosened it, the villagers seized hold of him, and while in their hands he quickly died, just as though he had been drowned. About an hour after, the sailors above hearing no more of their comrade, cut the cable and sailed away. In memory of this extraordinary event, the people of the village made the hinges of the church doors out of the iron of the anchor, and 'they are still to be seen.' At another time, a merchant of Bristol set sail with his cargo for Ireland. Some time after this, while the family were at supper, a knife suddenly fell in through the window on the table. When the husband returned, he saw the knife, declared it to be his own, and said that on such a day, at such an hour, while sailing in an unknown part of the sea, he dropped the knife overboard, and the day and hour were known to be exactly the time when it fell through the window."

These accidents, Gervase thinks, are a clear proof of there being a sea above, hanging over us.

THE SMALL BIRDS.—The little painted songsters follow man, and attend upon him. It is their mission to clear his ground and trees of insects which would otherwise destroy his fruit and grain. What would the country be without its birds? Their innocent notes gladden the ear, and their beautiful forms and plumage delight the eye. A pair of robins have been known to consume two thousand caterpillars in one week; and what an amount of service to that farm was that week's work! The farmer who shoots the small birds that confidingly surround his dwelling, errs both in economy and benevolence. What if the songsters take tithe of the ripened produce of field and garden; it is nothing but their due. They present their bills some months after the labor was performed, and are fully entitled to their living.

THE LOVER'S APPEAL.

I love thee! and my heart is proudly singing
The endless changes of these words to-day;
While round my pathway Hope is gaily clinging
The music which befits a wedding lay.
The clouds of sorrow which above me floated,
Trailing their sable robes before my sight,
In thy sweet presence, silently, unnoted
Have vanished, and bright day succeeded night.

I love thee! 'Tis no weak or foolish dreaming,
The passing fancy of an idle hour,
But like the sunshine, flit from Heaven streaming,
In all its manifold glory, pomp, and power;
It fills my being with a deep devotion,
Which only those who truly love can know;
And as the moon affects the tides of ocean,
So causest thou my love to ebb and flow.

I love thee! and my thoughts are fondly turning
To when within thy presence I was brought,
And, all unconscious, happily was learning
A lesson which in Eden first was taught.
That blessed hour, with many a joyous vision,
Most happy dreams, fond hopes, and pure desires,
Within my memory's bright and fair elysian
Is lighted now by love's warm, quenchless fires.

I love thee! Do not, dear one, I implore thee,
Turn from my words disdainfully away,
Nor doubt my truth when saying I adore thee,
And shall as long as reason holds its sway.
My heart, with all its deep and true affection,
I lay confidingly upon thy shrine;
Accept it, and through life the recollection
Shall be to me a joy almost divine.

FARMER BROWN'S STORY.

I have no words for her sweetness; I can't describe her; perhaps, were I to do so, or even could I place her picture before you, you might not see her as I did and do. Every eye makes its own beauty, and to me she was more beautiful than any other living creature. Nellie Brodie, I mean lovely Nellie Brodie, whose father was the sexton of our church, a good old man, but prosy, and prone to tell one or two long stories about ghosts, which proved not to be ghosts after all, whenever one met him. Many and many a time I've listened to them, out in his little porch, of a summer's night, with the moon bright above us, and mysterious chirps and cries in the bushes, and the smell of the evening primroses growing sweeter and sweeter, and Nellie, still and quiet as a mouse, sitting with folded hands between us.

We were busy folks enough by day; but we idled away the long summer evenings together, and thought no harm of it. It is good to be idle sometimes, in that happy sort of way; and to tell the truth, I like it. No man could say I neglected my duty. A better farm no man ever had, and larger crops none gathered, and no starved cattle grazed in my meadows. As for my dairy—but that was sister Jane's doing. A good house. A pretty, bright-eyed girl, with a warm heart, and a laugh that seemed to be catching. Alone together we two were, and we were fond of each other.

I never told her I liked Nellie Brodie, but I did not hide it from her. Nellie and she were great friends. Over and over again I tried to find out from Jennie what she said about me—Nellie, I mean—but the girl would never let a word slip out. A true woman hides another woman's secrets. I knew that, and I built on it.

"For," said I to myself, "if Nellie dislikes me, Jennie would give me a hint, sister-like, and save me from mortification. Either she knows nothing, or she knows Nellie likes me."

After that, I may say I courted Nellie. She knew I loved her, I'm sure of that; even if I had not said so out and out, she could not help knowing it.

But there were other young men in the place, of course, and many willing enough to listen to old Brodie's stories for the sake of looking at his daughter; and many a jealous pang I had in those days, for Nellie had the same pretty, kindly ways to all, and the same smile for every one.

I used to think that a "no" from Nellie's lips would go straight through my heart like a bullet, and I found it hard to risk the hearing of it. She must say it to all but one of us, and I was not so handsome as one, and not so witty as another, and not so rich as a third. I think I never knew how plain I was though, until I had my photograph taken one day, by a man who had a gallery in the village. I thought at first he must have made too much of my mouth and too little of my eyes; but he showed me plainly that the machine *must* take a good likeness, because it was a machine and couldn't make a mistake. I took the things home and put them in a drawer, and showed them to nobody; but they took the little vanity I had out of me, though I kept saying over and over again, "What do looks matter for a man?"

I'd meant, you see, to give Nellie one for her album; but I thought if I looked like that it was best not. I've heard other people speak of the same feelings since, in regard to photographers; and I am not sure now that they are always perfect.

Waiting and watching, hoping and fearing, I let the time slip by; and winter came, with its frost and snow, and old Mr. Brodie told his stories by the fire, instead of in the porch; and the lamp-light fell on Nellie's yellow hair, as she sat knitting, making the prettiest picture you ever saw; and I made up my mind to put my fate to the test before Christmas, and didn't! You see when a young fellow is in love he loses courage. But one thing I vowed—Nellie should take a sleigh ride with me.

Tom Armstrong had said—I had heard him—that he meant to drive the prettiest cutter, the prettiest pair of horses, and the prettiest girl in New Bridge. He meant Nellie by the prettiest girl. His turn-out might be what he chose, but Nellie should never go with him. She should go with me.

The snow fell fast; and by morning you could see nothing for miles around but great white drifts, though the sky had grown as clear as though it had been summer. I called for Nellie in the afternoon, and she was ready, and away we went. She looked charming, with her rosy cheeks and bright eyes and sunny hair; and I was happier than ever I had been in my life.

Going out of the village, we met Tom Armstrong, with his splendid cutter. He looked daggers at us both—or at least I thought so; and he went, as I heard afterwards, to invite Sue Nichol to ride with him. As he drove out of sight, I made up my mind to ask the question that would settle everything on our way home.

Man proposes and Heaven disposes. Things happened that evening that I had no thought of. We were going back, in the moonlight, when I put my hand on Nellie's, and made her turn her eyes towards me.

"I have been trying to say something to you for a long while," I said. "Perhaps you guess what it is."

But before I could utter another word, my horses took fright at something, and away they went like mad things. Nellie clung to me and screamed. I did my best to stop them. They left the road entirely and took their way across a field, and striking against a stump the snow had hidden, the vehicle was overturned, and we were thrown out together.

I was not hurt; but Nellie lay insensible. I lifted her in my arms and clasped her to my bosom, and begged her to open her eyes and to speak one word to me. But she was like one dead; and in my terror I dared not take her to her home. I carried her, instead, to my sister, who, frightened half out of her senses, came forth to meet me. She took Nellie into an inner room and bade me bring a doctor; and he was there soon.

I spent an hour of agony, such as I had never felt before; but at last Jennie came to me, all smiles.

"There is no danger," she said. "She has come to herself; she only fainted from fright. You haven't killed her, or even hurt her much, you foolish boy."

And I burst into tears. Jennie bent over me.

"But to think that she should be so sly," she said. "A gentleman's portrait in her bosom all this while, and not a word to me of it! I'll punish her for it now."

And away she ran back to Nellie, but my tears were all dried up, and my heart was like gall. She was engaged to some one else, then, this girl who was so dear to me. Some one had been before me, and she wore his portrait next her heart. Fool that I was not to guess it.

I never asked whose portrait it was—Tom Armstrong's or Jack Mayden's. I did not care. When Nellie was well enough to go, in the course of an hour or two, I drove her home and bade her good-bye.

I said, "I regret that I should have been the means of alarming you so, Miss Brodie."

And she looked up into my face with her great blue, innocent eyes, and said, "It was not your fault; you could not help it. It was so foolish to faint away."

And I thought to myself, "What deceitful creatures women are!" for the look she gave me was as sweet as if she had not worn another man's portrait in her bosom.

A week from that day I went to New York, and sought out an old ship-owner, who had been my father's friend.

"I'm tired of farming," I said, "and want to try the sea as a common sailor."

The old man would have laughed me out of the notion; but when he found me firm, he gave me what help he could.

I went on board a vessel bound for China, and wrote a line to sister Jennie, telling her to send for Uncle William and his wife to manage the farm, which I knew they would be glad to do; but I never told her where I was or what I had done. I meant, you see, to throw myself away, and be heard of no more by any one. Of course, I was mad, for the time; that is the only excuse for me.

So I led the sort of life a sailor in the merchant service leads—no very pleasant one, I can tell you—for a year or two, and I grew no better for it, and no happier. The other men had mostly some one at home—mother or sister, or wife or sweetheart—to get a letter or a message from at times; I, of my own act, had no one. And all the while, at work or at mess, or in the hours when watch was kept on deck, I thought of Nellie; saw her as she looked when she sat by her father's side in the summer moonlight; saw her with the firelight on her golden hair, beside the winter hearth; saw her smiling up at me, as we whirled through the snow-drifts that last bright day, and saw her as she lay like a dead thing in my arms. And fancy painted other pictures. I saw her as Tom Armstrong's wife. I saw her—oh, good heavens!—with his children on her knee!

I am not sure but that I should have turned idiot, had not something happened to alter the circumstances of my position. This was nothing else than the total wreck of our vessel, and my narrow escape from drowning, but with an arm broken by the falling of a spar. For a month I lay on a sick bed; and then, with a softened heart, and a feeling that I was sick of the sea, I went home to sister Jennie, to be a farmer again, if I could.

In those two years she had never had a line from me. Not an angry word did she give me, but ran into my arms and wept on my bosom like a child; and then she showed me the wedding-ring on her finger, and the baby lying asleep in the cradle, and told me whose wife she was.

She was Mrs. Tom Armstrong, and I had never guessed they liked each other!

"And I'm happy as the day is long," she said, "only for fretting about you. How could you go away so, Ned? If you did not think of my feelings, you might have remembered Nellie Brodie's."

"Nellie Brodie's feelings!" I cried. "Nellie Brodie's! Don't laugh at me, Jennie."

"Laugh at you!" she cried. "Laugh at you, my dear! I haven't a thought of it. Did you quarrel that night? It must have been a quarrel, I think. Whose fault was it, yours or hers?"

"Miss Brodie and I never had a quarrel," I said.

"Oh, Ned," she resumed, softly, "don't try to hide it from me, when I *saw* your portrait in her bosom. I told you so, I know, and thought it was all settled, and was so glad."

I started up and caught Jennie's wrist. "*My portrait!*" I cried.

"Why, Ned, Ned, *don't* look at me so," screamed Jennie; "what does it all mean? Your portrait, of course; one of those photographs you had taken—I found the rest after you went away. Oh, Ned, don't—don't look so, dear!"

"I thought you told me she wore another man's picture," I said. "*That* drove me away; *that*, and nothing else. Oh, what a wretched fool I've been! I did not know she *had* my picture, Jennie; and I might have won her—and I have cast her away! I, who loved her so, and have pined for her all these years!"

But Jennie, dear Jennie, with her kind, motherly face and loving woman's eyes, came close to me, and put her arms about my neck, and whispered, "Don't despair, Ned. She has never liked any one else, and I know, for certain, that she wears your picture still."

And those words brought my youth back to me; and the years seemed blotted out, and I was the Ned Brown who fell in love with Nellie Brodie, once more.

Well, Jennie told the truth. I went to see Nellie Brodie, and found her sweet and beautiful as ever; and we were married when the spring came and the birds began to build their nests in the green orchard. Afterwards, when she had been my wife some time, Nellie told me, under those very apple trees, how she had found my picture one day when no one saw her, and worn it afterwards for love of me—worn it and wept over it while I was far away, trying to forget her—trying, but never succeeding; for the love I had for Nellie Brodie was part of my life, and will be, I believe, part of the Eternity, where, when death severs us here, we shall be reunited.

GLIMPSES OF GHOSTLAND.

BY A LADY.

The following story was narrated to me by one of the most sensible and intelligent woman I ever met—a lady of great strength of character, joined to a fine and highly-cultivated mind. During her childhood my friend (whom I shall call Mrs. Mason) dwelt with her parents in a large, roomy house in the vicinity of one of our northern towns. The house was a double one, a solid, substantial structure built of stone, and had been purchased by her father a short time before the occurrences which I am about to relate. A wide lawn at the back of the mansion sloped down to the bank of a small stream, along the verge of which without intervening bank or path ran the terminating wall of the grounds. The stables were also situated at the foot of this lawn, and the back windows of these stables looked out on the water. Mrs. Mason had several brothers and sisters, all of whom, as well as herself, were still children at the period of which she spoke.

One summer evening her parents accepted an invitation to take tea with a friend, and went out, leaving the children at play in the library, a room which opened on the main hall on the ground floor. The front door was open, and as it grew dark a large hanging lamp which fully illuminated the hall, was lighted, so that every part of it, as well as the staircase, was fully illuminated. Late in the evening the children were disturbed at their play in the library by the sound of heavy footsteps ascending the outer steps, and then pacing along the hall. Imagining that it was their parents who had returned earlier than they expected, they rushed to the door to greet them; but to their astonishment they could see no one, though the heavy steps were still heard traversing the hall, ascending the staircase, and finally resounding on the floor of a room overhead. The children summoned the servants, who merely laughed at their story, till one of the maids, who had been busy upstairs, came down and said that her master and mistress must surely have returned, as she had heard them walking along the entry, and afterwards entering one of the rooms. Upon this, one of the men-servants went up stairs and made a careful search, but without finding any one. In the midst of the excitement the lady and gentleman of the house returned home, and upon hearing the story the gentleman himself instituted a second and more vigorous search, which, like the rest, was wholly without result.

Some time after this the children were playing under their nurse's care on the lawn at the back of the house one gray, dismal afternoon, in the early autumn. The attention of the whole party was suddenly attracted by the figure of a man passing slowly outside of the stone wall that stretched along the foot of the lawn, and finally disappearing behind the stable. As he did so, a tremendous uproar arose among the horses in the stable; and on examination, one of them, a remarkably fine and docile animal, whose stall happened to be next the window that opened on the water, was in an ecstasy of terror, plunging, rearing, and struggling to get loose, in a manner that rendered the task of releasing and removing him anything but an easy, or even a safe one. After the horse was got out of the stable and led away, the question arose, "What had frightened him?" Could the man they had seen passing behind the stable have done anything to terrify him? Then, for the first time, it dawned on the minds of the whole party that no human being could have walked where they had seen the passing figure, as the wall rose straight from the verge of the water, and there was no pathway between the wall and the stream, which in that spot was deep, though not very wide. Strange to say, the horse could never be induced to re-enter that stable, but always manifested signs of wild alarm and excitement when brought even to the door, though in all other respects he was perfectly gentle and tractable.

Owing to the size of the family, one of the large garret-rooms had been fitted up as a bedroom for one of the younger boys, who preferred having a chamber of his own to sharing the apartment of one of his brothers. He had not occupied it long before he began to complain of frightful dreams, and more than once he came trembling down stairs and took refuge in his mother's room, terrified by something horrible—*what*, he could not define, but something that came into his room at night and roused him from his slumbers. Thinking that the child was merely nervous and excitable, she changed the arrangements, put him to sleep in the bedroom of one of his brothers, and gave up the apartment in the garret to one of the servants. But in a very short time the complaints were renewed; the girl could not sleep on account of that vague, strange horror, which often drove her shrieking and half-awakened from her bed. So the lady had the room dismantled, and used it as a lumber-room, and during the remaining years of her occupancy of the house was troubled no more.

As time passed on, the increasing exigencies of his growing family induced Mrs. Mason's father to purchase a house in the town itself, and he accordingly let his country-mansion to a childless pair, a clergyman and his wife. The new residents had not been long installed when a series of ghostly disturbances began in real earnest. I believe that nothing more was ever *seen*; but the kitchen at night, when all the family had retired, would at times become the seat of an appalling uproar of inarticulate voices and clashing dishes and dragging furniture. If any one was bold enough to venture down stairs, the noise would suddenly cease, and the kitchen itself never showed any trace of these unearthly revels, every plate, dish, cup, and chair remaining in its accustomed place. Then, too, the footsteps of the invisible intruder were heard again; and often while the clergyman was writing in his study the steps would be heard coming through the door and across the room, and the unseen visitor would seat himself in the chair that usually stood opposite to that of the clergyman at the writing-table, when a sound as of the pages of a large book with stiff paper leaves being slowly turned would usually ensue. The clergyman often addressed his invisible companion, but never received any reply to his questions or his appeals.

On hearing these strange stories, Mrs. Mason's father determined upon trying to trace out the history of the house before it came into his possession. He learned that it had originally been occupied by the person who built it, a man of low origin, who, being looked upon as a pillar of the church, by the congregation to which he belonged, had been entrusted with the task of collecting certain sums due to it—whether actual income or subscriptions I do not now recollect. At all events, he never paid over the money, but launched out into sundry extravagances rather unusual for a man in his station of life, amongst which was the erection of this large and handsome house. But from the time the house was finished a blight seemed to fall upon his life. He gave up all his religious and regular habits, frequented evil company, took to drinking, and finally, in a fit of delirium tremens, hanged himself in the very garret-room of which I have before spoken. The scenes at his funeral were said to baffle description. The corpse was laid out in the kitchen, and thither all his late boon companions repaired, and turned the sad ceremonial into a hideous revel. Among other horrible deeds, they took the corpse from the coffin, propped it up in a chair, and poured whisky down its throat.

FACETIÆ.

THE STAGE VILLAIN.

Behold him, as with moody brow
About the darkened stage he stalks,
With ever-ready blade in hand,
And eye of hate and poison talks.
His glance the sweetest milk would sour,
And into acids sweetmeats turn;
And yet he has a heart they say,
Doth ever with soft feelings yearn
And lot to hear the loud applause
That virtue's hero doth command;
When, let our hero do his best,
He knows he cannot get a hand.
The execrations of the town
Ring in his ears and haunt his dreams;
And always just upon the point
Of some outrageous deed he seems,
Poor soul! Let's hope that when, at last,
Our "villain" passes in his checks,
No groan nor hiss may reach his ears,
And with harsh sounds his exit vex.

A VEIN pursuit—Mining.

NATURAL humbugs—Bees.

ALL flowers of speech spring from tulips.

WHAT coin is like the going up of a balloon? A-cent.

A ST. LOUIS man advertises crackers so exquisite that persons "sigh as their flavor dies away upon their breath."

To dance all night is "so nice!" the young ladies assure us. To have danced all night is not "so nice," we judge from their looks next morning.

"WHAT bonnets have you for old ladies?" asked a country dame of a New York milliner. "We have none now," was the reply; "all New York ladies are under forty."

IN some parts of Denmark a man is not allowed to drive a black and a white horse together, it being considered a sign of ill luck. In these parts, however, a man is considered lucky if he has them to drive.

"How old is your mamma?" asked a love-smitten old bachelor of the daughter of the widow who had enchanted him. "I don't know, sir; ma's age varies from about forty-three to twenty-five," was the artless reply; and the bachelor was disenchanted.

A SUITE of rooms was advertised at a fashionable watering-place as having among its attractions "a splendid view over a fine garden adorned with numerous sculptures." It was found on applying at the address that the garden adorned with sculpture was the cemetery.

A YOUNG man in New York sought to secure his sweetheart by strategy; so he took her out for a boat ride, and threatened to jump overboard into the lake if she didn't consent to marry him. But it did not work. She offered to bet him a dollar that he daren't dive in.

GRATTAN, being asked his opinion of the valor of a certain captain, who, from excess of feeling, put up with a severe castigation, replied, that he thought it odd, for to his knowledge the captain had fought. "Whom? whom?" cried his informant. "Shy," said the witty barrister.

"MAMMA," asked a little girl to her mother, as she passed a dentist's window, in which she saw some sets of false teeth, "what are those for?" "Those are for people who havn't any teeth, my dear." "Couldn't you buy some for baby, mamma?" asked the little one.

A KENTUCKY paper, in telling how a little boy got drowned while in swimming, says that after wading about for some time, he "stepped off over his head." Now that was a careless thing to do. Little boys should be very careful not to step over their heads, for even if they do not get drowned, they may break a leg.

A NEGRO in a religious gathering prayed earnestly that he and his colored brethren might be preserved from what he called their "upsettin' sins." "Brudder," said one of his friends, at the close of the meeting, "you ain't got de hang of dat ar word. It's 'besettin',' not 'upsettin'." "Brudder," replied the other, "if dat's so, it's so. But I was a-prayin' Providence to save us from de sin of intoxication; an', if dat ain't an upsettin' sin, I dunno what am."

AT a recent entertainment in this city one of the young ladies fainted. When she came to she declared that she had not fainted—that she had not been unconscious, when this little bit of dialogue occurred:

Nice young man—"Why, yes, you were, I know you were—you had your head on my shoulder."

Young lady—"Had I? I guess I was unconscious."

HOGG, the Ettrick Shepherd, happened to be seated at dinner next to a daughter of Sir William Drysdale. She was a charming young lady—unaffected, affable, and clever. To some remark which he made, she replied, "You're a funny man, Mr. Hogg." To which he instantly rejoined, "And you're a nice lassie, Miss Drysdale. Nearly all girls are like a bundle of pens cut by the same machine—ye're not of the bundle."

MALIGNANT INVENTIONS.—A London writer says: "Mr. Weller, Senior, considered keeping a pike to be the worst form of misanthropy, but we suspect there exists a still more malignant type. Who can it be that invents the toys with which the street boys divert themselves? What diabolical ingenuity is that which is forever devising some new instrument of torture for the sons of men, and what wrongs can they be which have bred a hate so relentless? It is idle to deny the existence of design. The hoop and peg-top may not have been inventions of the enemy, but assuredly the engine known as the tipcat was. But the cat, although admirable for harassing mankind in crowded thoroughfares, was, after all, a rude and primitive weapon, belonging to a kind of stone age or flint arrow-headed period of street-boy warfare. A more ingenious and destructive machine was produced in the catapult, which speedily recommended itself to the boy instinct as it proved to be effective against the windows as well as the eyes of society. It may be observed that, with a bitter mockery which marks the fiend, this pleasant plaything is always offered for sale in company with sweet-stuff. Another agreeable knick-knack put into the hands of youth was a ball with an elastic cord attached, so that when flung in the face of a passer-by it might be stopped within an inch or so of the mark. When the subject operated upon had his head close to a lamp-post, or better still, close to another head, the effect of this experiment was most pleasing. Other ingenious contrivances to the same philanthropic purpose might be mentioned, but our present purpose is to warn the pedestrian public against the latest invention in this line. This is a small wooden wheel bevelled on the edge and worked by a string, somewhat on the principle of a kite, so as to run between the legs of passengers and trip them up. All the previous playthings in vogue in the London streets having been in the form of missiles, it is for these the daring traveler who attempts a short cut keeps a lookout, and he consequently falls an easy victim. It is needless to say the little instrument is immensely popular with the boys of the street." We don't think this last has as yet found its way into this country, and we hope this notice of it may not prove the means of introducing it.

WIFE.

There is perhaps no other word of one syllable more significant or comprehensive than that of "wife," the mere uttering of which giving rise only to feelings of sympathy, affection, and love. Indeed, there is a wondrous tenderness in it, a charm, a magic; especially to those who feel themselves in possession of a treasure, or to one in quest of his ideal model of "perfection" vividly pictured in his imagination; and the thoughtful, reflecting mind delights to ponder over the group of good qualities and superior excellences which the word implies. Wife! brief, though familiar term, and replete with interest, the full meaning of which can only be approximated by allusion to the sum of her excellences. In the oft visitations of affliction does the value of a good wife appear most conspicuous. Here, perhaps, better than anywhere else, her qualities are put to the full test of practical utility, and often shine forth with resplendent brilliancy and lustre. Especially in sickness, who can so well appreciate the thousand little wants and kindly administer to them as the loving wife, whose whole being is enlisted for the welfare of her husband? Again, who can so well smooth the pillows, adjust the bed-clothes, furnish a palatable dish, a cup of tea to allay thirst, and the many other delicacies a wife *only* can think of, as the idol of our affections, in whom our confidence is never wanting? And how cheering, how animating and encouraging her calm, but lively and hopeful expression, as she glides gracefully through the apartment, occasionally wiping the perspiration from the throbbing temples, and carelessly impressing an affectionate kiss upon the flushed and feverish cheek? And as the clouds of adversity gather more and more dense, and the saddest of bereavements seems imminent, though the tear-drops unbidden occasionally gush from their silent depths, the light footsteps of the vigilant wife will be heard in the active performance of her peculiar and trying duties, and faith fails not, nor does her hope languish or her patience weary.

Animated and inspired by one so lovely, so entrancing, so heavenly and divine, who would not exclaim:—

"My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight."

BY annihilating the desires, you annihilate the mind. Every man without passions has within him no principle of action, nor motive to act.

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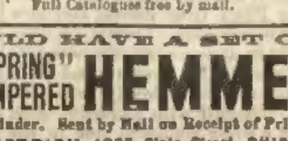

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CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

In the springtime of life, when bright hope is in bloom,
And care does not wait on the pillow,
When the sweet early flowers shed their richest perfume,
Nor ever waves life's weeping willow;
While the rainbow of promise gleams brightly above,
How fair is young life, and how exquisite love!

As the fond recollection recalls a sweet face,
The picture undimmed by a sorrow,
But reveals to the heart that it still has a place
No after affection could borrow;
For the niche was so filled by youth's fanciful dream
That all later loves but mere fantasies seem.

Ah! how sweet in the earliest blush of the morn,
From the hedgerow the redbreast was singing;
All the day o'er the field while we planted the corn
The notes of the brown thrush were ringing;
And my memory still, for melodious joy,
Reverts to the bird notes I loved when a boy.

On the steep, rugged hill-side the red squirrels played;
In autumn how oft have I listened
To their musical chat in the chestnut-wood shade,
Near the pond where the yellow perch glistened!
If perchance we were gathering brown chestnuts there,
We grudged not to leave for the squirrels a share.

Many rambles and plays of those bright boyhood days
Are fresh in fond memory ever;
While the playmates of youth, by their kind, winning ways,
Are mine by ties time cannot sever.
And if age crown with gray at the "three score and ten,"
Still—still I'll recall those loved faces again.

THE WIDOW'S STRATAGEM.

BY MRS. S. S. COLT.

"I fancy that by his next visit the important question will be propounded!—Heigho! I wonder if I could ever manage to say 'yes?'"

Thus mused little Mrs. Grey as she closed and locked the door of her private parlor in that large boarding house, and then wheeled into its place the easy chair which Mr. Brown had occupied three hours that evening while entertaining her with his reminiscences of travel and adventure in the Old World. She pulled a tiny, jewelled watch from her belt, and consulted it—"Half an hour later than he ever tarried before! And then how significantly he asked me if *I* would fancy a bridal trip to Europe! What could have possessed me to blush like a girl of sixteen at such a question? I am by no means sure that the excursion would be pleasant with him by my side. Oh! Flora Grey! Flora Grey! You ought to decide whether you like this man or not! It is very imprudent to let him come here time after time when you do not know your own mind any better! There," continued the impulsive little lady, "I will take this seat and never leave it till I have decided on this case, *pro* or *con*, if I do not close my eyes to-night."

Now Flora Grey was a wilful one, whose word, like the law of the Persians and Medes, was unchangeable. Loosening a few pins, the heavy masses of her braided hair fell around as a veil, and she tossed her head triumphantly as if fully prepared for a tete-a-tete with herself.

"Come, Flora Grey," she soliloquized, "bring forth all the wisdom at your command, for you must not trifle longer with your own heart and life! First, what have you to say in favor of Mr. Brown? You think he is very good looking? *Do* you?"

Backward went memory to visit one of her secret, hidden chambers, where there are pictures hung in the morning of life, and looked at afterward scarcely thrice in a lifetime. *There* she saw a young Apollo-like head, glorious in manly beauty, and undimmed by the dust of death which had lain upon its brow now these many years. Set side by side with this unforgotten vision, how Mr. Brown's image faded and grew common-place!

But Flora Grey was a woman of the world, and murmuring, "Such judgment is but folly: the grave and the deep sea give not up their dead," she lifted her eyes resolutely to the portrait hanging above the mantel, of one to whom in the summer of her girlhood she had been the "old man's darling," and for whom at the age of little more than twenty she had worn the sables of widowhood. This also was a face for which one need not blush,—of a stern, gray-haired, haughty man, upon whose autumn of life she had cast the sunshine and smiles of spring.

The sandy hair and keen eyes of Mr. Brown contrasted unfavorably with this second portrait in the lady's musings, and she put away her thoughts with a sighing, "Never mind his face. I must remember that I am fading with every year."

She cast a side glance toward the full-length mirror set in the wall, and beholding the reflection of a brilliant image, with crimson cheeks and gleaming eyes, a somewhat satisfied smile curved her red lips, as she repeated the harmless libel, "yes, fading with every year. And this Mr. Brown is entertaining, even fascinating in conversation! To be sure, he is an Englishman, and if poor Aunt Emily were here she would say, 'Child, don't marry an Englishman, not if every hair on his head was a diamond,' but then she was prejudiced because Lonie's husband broke her heart. Pshaw! American husbands do the same oftentimes, and Lonie was too tender and fragile to have wedded any man and been happy. The sensitive plant should never bloom for married life. Mr. Brown *is* an enterprising business man, they tell me, yes, *they* tell me, whose standard of merit is success, and who judge of honor and honesty by the loose, worldly creed of Wall street. How do *I* know but that Robert Brown is pondering by what key he may unlock the coffers of the rich widow at this very moment."

The young creature sprang from her seat and paced restlessly to and fro across her little parlor. Ten years ago what vigils she had kept in the night watches, and what visions of the engulphing sea haunted her pillow, but she had tamed that wild anguish and buried those girlish woes so deep that they had never been discerned by the gray-haired man she married. To-night the old yearnings were resurrected from the graves of the past, and the cry came alike from lips and heart, "Oh, that I were not so young, so lonely, and *so* destitute of faith in man!"

A letter lying on the piano where she had tossed it unopened when brought by a servant during Mr. Brown's visit, now attracted her attention. She read it meditatively with knitted brows.

"Good Mr. Carey," she exclaimed, relapsing into her usual habit of soliloquy. "He seems very much concerned at my loss of a few hundred dollars; any one would think I were left penniless to need his condolences. I wonder, by the way, if I cannot make this disastrous fire an occasion for testing Mr. Brown's regard, and showing me how much he cares for Flora Grey herself, and how much for her money bags. Certainly a little fibbing would be almost excusable now."

The next evening Mr. Brown found Flora Grey looking unusually lovely in a soft, purple silk, trimmed with exquisite laces, and wearing a white hot-house rose in her magnificent hair. His latest bouquet adorned the marble table, and his favorite piece of music was open on the piano. Very well satisfied the gentleman took his seat after one keen glance had assured him of these tokens. It was a chilly evening, and the sparkling open fire seemed genial.—Mrs. Grey's velvet easy chair stood on one side of the hearth, and Mr. Brown ranged himself upon the other, knowing by past experience that this was as near as he might venture to approximate to the airy little mistress of this hearth and fire.

Conversation ran in much its usual channels, but the lady was somewhat silent, and the gentleman rather shy and slightly nervous.

"Dear Mrs. Grey, you evaded a reply to one question of mine the other evening, may I repeat it once more?"

"If you like," was the coy reply.

"I have a special interest in learning if a bridal trip to the Old World would not proffer charms to you, dear lady?"

"Perhaps so! I cannot tell!" Her voice sounded icy in defiance of all efforts to the contrary, but as it grew more natural under the control of a steady will, she added, "Mr. Brown, do you know that I have met with serious losses, and it is well for me to question whether I could win my bread by the exercise of any talents which I may possess."

"No! Bless me! I had not heard of any such misfortune. Are you telling me the truth?"

The lady bowed her assent with a grave, sorrowful look, but her gleaming eyes were bent steadfastly upon the roses of the carpet at her feet. Mr. Brown's condolences were not wanting in warmth and heartiness, and indeed he seemed quite shocked when he learned that she wished, if possible, to obtain a few music pupils.

To the strict letter of the truth kept Flora Grey, and if her admirer had been a little more disinterested she would not have allowed him to deceive himself so completely with her story of Mr. Carey's letter and account of the fires in Linden Block. She stated but facts, for she had indeed sustained serious losses, although large as they were her ample fortune was but slightly impaired.

"I have already secured one music scholar, Mr. Brown; does that not argue well for my future success in sustaining myself?"

"Oh! dear—dear—dear me!" he replied.

Whether Mr. Brown would have felt as doleful if he had known that Mrs. Grey's pupil was a young blind girl whom she taught gratuitously, may be questioned! Flora Grey said little, but significant hints were swiftly woven by Mr. Brown's imagination into a tissue of heart-breaking disaster, and knowing that time and circumstances would undeceive him, the little widow cannily fostered his delusions.

"I sympathize with you sincerely; such a reverse must be a terrible blow!"

"Oh, no," responded Flora, in silvery tones, "while I retain youth and health and *friends*, I cannot feel crushed by any change of fortunes."

"Will you command me in any way that I can serve you? You cannot honor me more highly,"—these were Robert Brown's parting words a half hour later, as he rose to go away. A demure, enigmatical smile rested on the widow's face as she returned his last bow, and the door closed on his retreating form.

"Gone! Gone! Gone! And he has not proposed!!!" she cried with an exultation of tone which proved that he had never touched more than her fancy by his apparent devotion.

"He will never come *here* again!"

He never called again!

Flora Grey sat in her dressing-room one rainy summer evening, when a note was brought which had been left at her door.

The direction, though legible, had evidently been penned by a trembling hand, and wondering she opened and read:

"Mrs. Grey—Flora—a friend of your early days whom you have long supposed to be sleeping on an ocean pillow still lives, and though he may be near the confines of the grave entreats you to come to him without delay. KING TEMPLE."

The waiting-maid was startled by the white face of her mistress, and hastily brought water and wine, but pushing the restoratives aside the lady said, "Order my carriage directly, Kitty, and prepare to accompany me where I am going."

"To-night?"

"Yes, hasten!"

The imperious tone brooked no opposition, and soon Kitty and her excited mistress were on their way. The carriage drew up finally before a handsome house on the west side of the city.

"Ring the bell," was Mrs. Grey's direction to her coachman, "and ascertain if Mr. Temple resides here?"

An affirmative answer was returned, and leaving Kitty in the carriage Flora stood presently by the bedside of the dying.

Was Azrael lingering there with folded wings? The lady's face was blanched with a more deathly pallor than the sick man's brow. *His* cheeks were deeply flushed—his eyes lit with fever light—his tones were clear and ringing with excitement.

A physician stood near—the pledged *repertoir* of all men's secrets—his patient heeded him not.

How did *she* ever hear? how did *he* ever tell that bewildering story of perilous shipwreck, and a stern wrestle with death amid the waves; then rescue by a ship bound for far-off ports. After three years of unsought exile, of a return in good time to stand unseen or unknown in the village church while the bridal train swept by, and the "Boy's Love" became the "Old Man's Bride."

Then years of desolate wanderings, ending in a gloomy return to American shores, and, more strange still, of overhearing in the cafe of a hotel the confidence reposed by Robert Brown in some chosen friend, which revealed the story of Flora Grey's widowhood, her loneliness and *losses*. The passionate story ended thus.

"And now, if I live, or if I die, all that I have is yours, Flora."

She replied, woman-like, by a burst of tears, such as angels might have borne upward, eloquent praise and thanksgiving to the dear Father of all, whose hand bestoweth every good and *perfect* gift.

Joy is a potent healer, and in a few weeks' time King Temple and Flora Grey stood together by the marriage altar. And the bride knew with unspeakable satisfaction that she was loved and wedded for herself, and not for her possessions.

Some freak of circumstance ordered that the same steamer in which Robert Brown ere midsummer crossed the ocean on a business but not a bridal trip, bore also the newly married pair, but Mrs. King Temple and her quondam suitor meet as strangers evermore.

The Princess Marie Hohenlohe is at the head of the Vienna kitchens for the poor. She is a lovely and elegant woman, but she goes every morning to the great hall, accompanied by Sisters of Charity, and putting on a large apron, devotes two hours to cutting bread and meat and ladling out broth to the hungry creatures who come to her for food.

FRIENDS.

There is an old saying that "friends are summer birds." And very good birds too. What fault have we to find with them? But in using the term "summer birds," of course the author of the saying alluded to such as migrate in the winter months,—and very wisely they act in so doing, when they find the country they are in becomes at variance with their comfort or inclinations; in fact, their folly would be shown, under such circumstances, in remaining in it. It may not be flattering to the pride of those to whom the cut is given; but nature is nature still, whether it be human or (if we may use the expression) bird nature, and we must not expect she will give up her prerogative unless where strong ties act as a counterpoise to its dictates. And further, we must be aware that if the world, ever was a Utopia, years, lustrums, and centuries have passed away since such was the case. Not being now the amiable inhabitants of such an Elysium, we must look at man as he is, not as that which he ought to be.

If, however, we can only bring ourselves to do justice to others, and to achieve that far more difficult part, to properly appreciate ourselves, we shall find that real friends do not play the part of the summer bird without usually having some just reason for so doing; and that when the summer of a frequent or constant intercourse ceases, it as frequently arises from change of circumstances and situations, throwing persons into different spheres, as from any want of amiability, or the presence of any ingratitude or versatility of disposition on the part of those from whom we experience a deviation from accustomed attentions.

One of the origins—indeed the great origin—of our chagrin on experiencing a cessation of those attentions we have been accustomed to, and probably the feelings that prompted the comparison of friends with summer birds, arises from the very signal error we commit in holding those as *friends* that common prudence should induce us to consider merely in the light of *acquaintance* from whom we have no earthly right or reason to expect the slightest sacrifice of time, interest or even amusement.

It is one of the strong attributes of the mind to hope that which it wishes; and in no particular is it shown more strongly than in estimating by anticipation the friendly feelings towards us of those to whom we may happen to be known. This great error will usually be found to increase in the same ratio as the particular person whose friendly feeling we wish to challenge is more or less in a higher grade of society than ourselves, and whose means, interest, or power, is greater than our own.

We are, in such cases, apt to lay claims to acts of friendship from those with whom we could only at best boast an acquaintance. But the error goes much further than even this; for we frequently make the request not in reference to our own position, but to the power of those from whom we solicit or expect a friendly part.

What is the usual consequence of such proceedings in private life? It will be found in the loss of the acquaintance of some one whose notice was flattering; one who felt toward us as much friendly feeling as we had any right to expect, and who would have been disposed to award to us as much courtesy and attention, or, on occasion, as much service as we had any grounds for anticipating. From our own folly, his visits now grow few and far between; and from a well-grounded suspicion of a repetition of similar arrogant requests, they gradually cease altogether. He is then designated the "summer bird." We will say he is so, but is no more to be blamed than is the swallow who wings his way from us when he has reason to anticipate the rigors of winter. We have chilled what friendly feeling did exist towards us, and the man, as the bird, is not to be censured if he avoids a locality boding him inconvenience and annoyance, and returns to places where he is not subject to the one or the other.

AFTER-DINNER TALK.

It is a question with some persons whether we live to eat, or eat to live. Now, so far as the writer's own opinion is concerned, the question was settled long ago in the affirmative, in accordance with the rule adopted by the Irishman, who, when he was asked whether he would have brandy or whisky, replied, "Faith! I'll take them both." While everybody must concede that unless we eat we cannot live, there are not a few who contend that the Gracious Giver would not have granted to us palates to appreciate rare savors and delicate flavors unless He had intended we should live to eat. No one, however, will assert that we live solely to eat, any more than one will declare that life is sustained solely by eating.

The old saying, "As we journey through life let us live by the way," is not a bad rule to follow. Indeed, life is too short, and pleasures too few, for us to neglect any of the resources which Heaven has granted to us for enjoying ourselves; and the pleasures of the table are not among the least of good gifts.

It is a popular fallacy that "enough is as good as a feast." He who first uttered it was either a miserable dyspeptic, or else was disappointed in a banquet. He had looked upon the grapes and pronounced them sour, and there was no truth in him; but a plentiful supply of envy and uncharitableness. Charles Lamb terms this saying "A vile cold-scrag-of-mutton sophism; a falsehood palmed upon the palate, which knows better things. If nothing *else*," he says, "could be said for a feast, this is sufficient: that from the superflux there is usually something left for the next day."

To appreciate the pleasures of the table, however, it is not necessary to sit down to a sumptuous feast; on the contrary, a few well-prepared dishes are often partaken of with more zest and yield greater delight than the most elaborate of banquets could give. Good fellowship has much to do with the pleasures of the table; the best dinners have sometimes been spoiled through a lack of harmony among the company. The host is to blame for this. He should be careful in the selection of his guests, and endeavor, so far as lies in his power, to bring together only such spirits as have somewhat in common between them. It is his duty—especially if his guests are comparatively strangers to each other—to advance such subjects of conversation, when talk flags (as it sometimes will, between the courses), as he may know to be most agreeable to those about him; and where he perceives that a dangerous topic has unwittingly been introduced, skillfully, without seeming to desire so to do, to turn the stream of talk into another and smoother channel. Of course, no guest would knowingly say aught offensive to another, nor would any one take exceptions to such remarks, even if he should deem they were spoken intentionally; for the table of one's host is sacred, and no angry recriminations should be tolerated thereat.

HARD TO PLEASE.

BY GLEN CAROL.

There are a number of persons in this world who—you may have discovered this fact for yourself—are exceedingly difficult to please. Nothing that you may do for them, at however great a loss of time and convenience to yourself, is quite in accordance with their idea—nothing that is, is quite right, despite the old adage!

It is really a marvel that they can continue to exist in such an unsatisfactory world. They have such a nice little, dry little, way, sometimes, of receiving at your hands what you had intended to be an especial favor—such a lofty, "its-of-no-consequence" air with which they accept the gift, or receive the kindness; such a bland, indifferent smile—readily interpreted by the experienced—that seems to say, "such trifles as you have to offer can be *only* trifles to me—however, I accept them to please you." There are still others of this class who are not gifted with even a shallow politeness. Do them a favor, present them with a book or a bouquet, for example, and they will immediately proceed to inform you that they don't like so and so's writings, (the author of the book given them, of course!) he is too prosy, or too flippant, or—but they are as much obliged as if—!

The bouquet you had arranged with taste, and you dare to *think* so—the flowers were from your choicest plants, and you had not spared them. Imagine the recipient of the fragrant gift saying, as she took them, "Yes, quite pretty, quite pretty; but you should have seen the flowers on Mrs. S——'s table yesterday!"

And there are others who profess gratitude immeasurable in return for favors received; but beware of those, for no sooner does your shadow flit from out the doorway, than the aforesaid favors are openly discussed with whoever chances to be present, and if you were only listening you might catch stray whispers wafted on—"horrible," "that thing," "absurd," &c.

Verily, though "it takes all kinds of people to make a world," one can't help wishing occasionally that it *didn't* take quite so many!

SMART CHILDREN.

BY DAISY BURNS.

Did you ever notice what smart children everybody has? I never saw a child in my life but it was "just the smartest thing that ever did live." I never noticed this particularly until last week; I went to make some visits, and upon my word I saw nothing but smart children until I returned home.

Mrs. Sydney has a little boy about four years old; quite a fine boy. She was icing three large cakes as I entered, and after placing them out in the sun, upon a right new chicken-coop her husband had just sent around—so the dogs and cats could not get to them—she sat down and began telling me some of little Fred's smartness. After a time she missed the child; then such a commotion as she raised; down to the well we went, then to the cellar, into every dangerous place we could find, and at last we spied him upon the chicken-coop quietly licking the icing from his mother's cakes. She laughed and thought him such a smart child; but her husband kept a grocery store and sugar was plenty.

Mrs. Jennings has another smart child; a little red-haired, freckled faced girl two years old, and who is—Mrs. Jennings says, and which fact I don't doubt—as smart as she is pretty. Mrs. Jennings told the little lady to throw me a kiss, but the young lady shook her head; then a lump of sugar was held up, and after a good deal of coaxing she did deign to throw me one.

"Now Daisy," said the fond mother, "did you ever see the like; she's only two years old, and so quick; isn't it wonderful?"

Mrs. Carter is mother to another *smart one*. She told me little Dick had heard her complain of weakness so much that every time she told him to do anything he didn't want to do, he would throw himself on the floor and declare he was "too weak." Little Dick is four years old, and to my notion just a *leetle* too smart.

Then there was Mrs. Jones' baby; why she said it just shook its little fist at her, made faces at its papa, and bit little brother; it was a very smart baby!

I made all my visits, and as I stood at my own gate eating an apple, a young gentleman over whose brow about five summers had passed, looked up at me and asked, "Betterent you give me a piece of that apple?"

"No, I betterent," I said to the dirty little fellow.

"Yes, you bet," he said. I gave him the apple and went in the house, and now the puzzle is, if the children are all so very smart, where do so many stupid folks come from?

Keep Up Family Attachments.

FROM A LADY'S SCRAP-BOOK.

One of the saddest things about a large family, who have lived happily together for years under the old roof-tree, is the scattering to distant homes, which takes place as they grow up, one by one, to years of maturity. It is often the case that, in the cares and bustle of business, letters grow more and more infrequent, and finally brothers and sisters will sometimes entirely lose sight of each other. These kindred ties are much too sacred to be thus lightly severed. It takes such a little while to write a letter, and the expense is so trifling, that there can hardly be an excuse for the neglect.

A loving family circle, thus widely severed, adopted a curious but beautiful plan for keeping informed of each other's welfare. The two most remote, on the first of each month, write a part of a page on a large sheet, containing the principal news of the month, and this is forwarded to the family next in order. Some member of the household adds a little contribution, and sends it on to the next, and so on till the circle is complete. Thus the family circle goes its rounds twelve times a-year, and each one is kept well-informed of the joys, sorrows, plans, and pursuits of the others. Family gatherings are frequent in such households, and the old home attachments never grow cold.

Sons in particular, away from home, are apt to grow very neglectful of letter-writing. Oh, if they knew how many heart-aches such neglect often causes to the loving breast that pillowed their tired heads in childhood, they would not be so thoughtless. If they knew the joy that a letter brought, and could see how its lightest words were dwelt over, and talked over by the fireside, they would not be so sparing of those messages. Are not some of us sadly in arrears in this particular?

In Nevada artificial lakes are being constructed in the Sierras, where water may be stored for use during the dry season.

CORRESPONDENTS' BUREAU.

☞ It is the intention to make this Department an attractive feature to all our readers. In addition to important and particular information for Subscribers, Contributors, and others, it will necessarily contain many novel, instructive, and entertaining topics, fully discussed in answer to the numerous Notes and Queries contained in our general correspondence.

ANSWERS TO ALL INQUIRERS.

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TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Authors and others will take notice that, by rules of the P. O. Department, Manuscripts intended for publication in periodicals are subject to letter rates. Insufficiently stamped MSS. will not be taken out of the P. O. by us. Rejected MSS. will not be returned, unless by special request, with sufficient stamps enclosed to pre-pay postage.

RESPECTFULLY DECLINED.—Woman's Love—The Wind and Leaf—Charles Sumner—Inflation—Miss Vernon's Choice—Helen Weston's Trial—Caught in his own Trap.

TO GENERAL CORRESPONDENTS.

Lucca. You have chosen a very ambitious *nom-de-plume*, we must say. You are not at all too old to learn music, but just how long you may be in attaining to a certain degree of proficiency depends altogether upon your aptitude, ability and perseverance.

Mrs. M. P. B., (Parkersburg, W. Va.,) writes: "Will you, or some one of your subscribers, please give me the necessary instruction for varnishing oil paintings or chromos, and the name of the varnish used?" A picture-dealer might be able to give you the desired information.

MITTIE. Involuntary blushing arises from a sort of nervous timidity. There is no prompt and immediate means of cure for it. It will no doubt wear off in time. The more you mix in society, and the older you become, the more confidence and self possession you will acquire, and then the habit will gradually leave you.

SCHOOL BOY. "Can you tell me the meaning of the term 'Pons Asinorum,' and to what it refers?" It is a slang expression, familiar to most scholars, and means literally the "Bridge of Asses," and is a name given to the fifth proposition of the first book of Euclid. To some students this proposition is somewhat of a poser, and hence the phrase.

J. P. E. The best way for you to obtain all the information you want on the subject of the language of flowers, is to purchase the latest work out which gives all the descriptions of the different flowers. Even in this department of sentiment the fashion is constantly changing, and if you wish to keep up with the times, you must not go by any old work on the subject.

J. Y. L., (Cleveland, O.) We are afraid you will have to give up hopes of ever being the happy owner of a beard and whiskers, which seems to be the height of your ambition. If at your age (twenty-five years) there are, as you say, no signs whatever of these coveted hirsute appendages, no artificial means whatever would effect their growth. Of this you may rest assured, all statements to the contrary notwithstanding.

J. C., (Almond, N. Y.) On our fourth page, in our Salutatory, we have made reference to some of our subscribers having been on our books for forty years consecutively. Since that was penned, however, we have received the following letter from this correspondent, who is even an older friend. He says: "This will make fifty (50) years I have been a constant subscriber to THE SATURDAY EVENING POST. I commenced when a very young man, and am now seventy years of age. In fact, it gave me my first idea of literary reading."

B. F. P., (Corry, Pa.) We deeply sympathize with you in all your troubles and misfortunes, which you have stated to us in your letter; but we feel ourselves totally unable to advise you how to proceed, knowing nothing, as we do, of many little circumstances regarding your surroundings, which must be first learned before any counsel can be given. Unfortunately, we receive many letters of an equally distressing nature, and we are all the more deeply touched on account of our inability to offer any practical advice.

MAUD. "We girls have been having a great discussion as to whether the love of woman is stronger and more enduring than that of man, and not being able to agree upon the subject, have come to you for your opinion." We agree with what Byron says upon this, and think that there is no one who will deny that the love of woman is infinitely stronger than that of man, because more concentrated and selfish, being the very element of her being. Woman love for the sake of loving; man for the sake of being loved. All experience has proved the truth of this, and we are surprised at you girls having any doubts upon the subject.

A. R. T., (Conway, N. Y.,) asks: "1st. Where is the vanilla bean grown? 2d. Who is the author of the poem 'The Jolly Old Pedagogue?'" 1st. In Mexico and portions of Central America. The finest perfume of the vanilla bean has made it a great favorite of late years in extracts for chocolates creams, &c., and the consumption has nearly doubled since the war. The annual import from Vera Cruz, the centre of the business, is 2,000 pounds, or 5,000,000 beans, half of which is reshipped to Europe. Mexican beans are very valuable, bringing easily from $25 to $30 a pound. There is an inferior quality grown on the Philippine Islands, all of which are consumed in Europe. The vanilla bean is an orchid or air plant, very moist, and five or six inches in length. 2d. George Arnold, a talented young author and journalist, who died a few years ago.

A. L. F., (Newark, N. J.) "Can you find out for me who was the author of the saying, 'Taking time by the forelock?' I cannot find it in a book of Familiar Quotations, which I have by me." This phrase has long been proverbial in English, being met with in literature at least as early as Queen Elizabeth's time. Thus, for instance, Spenser, in Sonnet LXX., says:

"Go to my love, where she is careless laid,
Yet in her winter's bower not well awake;
Tell her the joyous time will not be staid,
Unless she do him by the forelock take."

The Germans have a somewhat similar saying "Zeit beim zopf fassen"—to catch hold of Time by the queue; on the other hand, "Zeit beim Schwanz fassen"—to take Time by the tail—is to be behindhand.

H. R. D., (Leavenworth, Ind.,) has written us a long letter, which, however, she begs us not to publish, but the pith of which is that the gentleman to whom she engaged herself to be married, over a year ago, has now grown cool towards her, and has asked that the engagement be broken off. She wants our advice as to what she should do, whether to release him or hold him to the engagement. When a gentleman has made an engagement and has been accepted he is much in the same position, if we may be allowed the comparison, as if he had challenged some one to fight, and the challenge was accepted. In the one case, the challenged party has the privilege of naming time and weapons; in the other, the lady names the happy day and the person. If he wishes to withdraw from the engagement, what else can he do but to throw himself upon the generosity of the lady? Of course, H. R. R. ought to release him; she surely would not insist upon a man marrying her who she knows does not love her, and who would be committing perjury by taking upon himself vows he cannot keep. If she did, she would be like Shylock, only that the "pound of flesh" she claimed in virtue of her bond would not be "nearest the heart," but the heart itself.

H. C. S., (Candia, N. H.) "I am so unfortunate as to have a yellow, dull and deadened complexion, and nothing I can do will make it any clearer or better. I am almost ashamed to tell you that I have tried all kinds of cosmetics and washes, but find that instead of getting any better, I am getting worse, and as a last resource I come to you, in the hope you may be able to tell me what I should do." Although you do not actually say as much, we infer that your present troubles all originated from this foolish and dangerous practice of using cosmetics and other artificial means with which you ladies, not content with the gifts of nature, endeavor to improve and patch up the imperfections of your complexions. You had better now stop them altogether, and if you will follow out the directions we will give you, you will find that a great change will take place. First procure a rough towel, and give your skin a good, brisk rubbing, so as to get the blood circulating, the nerves excited, the dead skin removed, and the little secreting organs of the skin at work, lively and healthfully. You should then take exercise, and pay proper attention to diet, and if, after a month's trial, your cheeks are not fresh and rosy, and your complexion soft, clear and beautiful, we shall be greatly mistaken and surprised at the result.

J. S. B. wishes us to tell him the best manner of proposing marriage to a young lady. A curious question, to be sure, to put to a staid editor. But, ridiculous as the question may seem, it is a very serious one, we are aware, to thousands of young men. Bashfulness in a man is rather an awkward quality, but it has its charms, for young ladies see in it purity of thought and intention, and a fear of wounding their delicate susceptibilities. But, when we come to look at it seriously, we must admit that it is a weakness, a species of moral cowardice. High-spirited young ladies do not appreciate it, and therefore it is that we see sometimes bolder lovers come upon the stage and win them, while the more bashful ones, who have let the prize slip through their fingers, consider themselves jilted. Our advice to all such young men is to be bold and resolute; choose, as Othello did, a pliant hour, and if the young lady has any real affection for you, there will be a satisfactory acknowledgment. Women are keener of perception naturally than men are, and when they detect in their lover a true, warm and honorable affection, if they can respond to it, they will do so with delicate frankness; if they cannot, they will refuse as kindly as possible. Very few women despise an honest, manly affection. So let our correspondent, J. S. B., take heart, and pop the question without further delay.

THE BOUDOIR.

FASHION NOTES AND QUERIES.

[Communications relating exclusively to subjects considered in this department, in order to receive prompt attention, should be addressed to "Fashion Editress" SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

The exceedingly cold and backward spring has had its chilling effects upon the world of Fashion, and kept back the thousand and one beautiful adornments which only the "openings" thus far have brought to light.

But now that "May day" has come and gone, we must perforce wear our spring garniture, e'en though we *freeze* in our fashionable attempt to be seasonable.

In no branch of a lady's toilet do we see so much to admire as in

THE MILLINERY.

Everything in hats, flowers, laces, feathers, and silks, that goes to make up the fashionable hat of the day, is exquisitely beautiful; and even in the coldest day one revels in the show-room of the *artiste* milliner as in summer time.

Perfection is reached in the imitation of flowers, grasses, and even the cereals are imitated; and we have waving wheat and trembling oats in astonishing likeness to the original.

The shapes are all that can be desired to please every height, shade and form. One of the novelties is very like the low-crowned medium brims, soft hat so long worn by the gentlemen; only these are in chip or hair, the brim caught up at the back. The edge bound usually with black mignon silk, and then for a small face an aigrette of jet, silver, or pearl catches the left side to the crown; a wreath of flowers or a miniature grape vine with small grapes and slight tendrils encircle the crown, and a larger bunch of grapes mingles with loops of the silk at the back. Some hats set very closely to the head, and just peeping from the entire edge is a tiny border of finely crimped muslin.

And then we have a reversible bonnet so trimmed and shaped that it can be worn either back or front over the face.

Then, there are the Rabagas so fashionable last summer, only now caprice wears them three-quarter fronts; that is, the highest part is at one side, instead of in front.

SILK SUITS,

In all the new shades of grays, browns and blues, and which are far more decided in their tone than last season, are really formed in excellent taste. Knife-blade pleating is a prevailing trimming for silk; the only objection being the large amount of material used in forming it—Puffs usually head the pleating; and either a standing pleating above this, or three very narrow ruffles, shirred, and one just visible above the other.

PARASOLS AND SUN UMBRELLAS.

The parasol for common use is among the things that were. We only see them now in dressy affairs, elaborately embroidered with jet and edged with jet fringe; or the plain twilled silk with beautiful covers of real lace in black or white; and most elaborately carved handles in coral or mother of pearl, or ivory inlaid with gold or silver. The sun umbrella is all this season one could wish for. The sticks are light, with tips of cornelian or silver; and a beautiful style in light horn sticks, imitation of amber, and carved prettily; they are covered with soft India twilled silk, and the favorite colors are black, very dark blue and brown; and in size they are sufficiently large to shield one in a sudden shower until cover is gained.

UNDER GARMENTS AND LINGERIE.

A new feature for ladies this season is the new hand-embroidered and hand-made garments that come to us from abroad. These useful articles are embroidered by the Alsatian peasants, after being modelled in Paris; and the material is the best of percale, than which there is nothing more durable known. Everything from chemises to toilette sacques and bibs for infants is given us, and that too at prices that would hardly get up the most common article of home manufacture.

THE HAIR.

The style of doing the hair for the coming season seems yet in embryo. In the meantime each one is evidently practising to find which style is best suited for them; therefore we see hair in every style; high, low, hanging; curled and plaited. Still Parisians are wearing it immensely high; consequently we may expect to soon see it all on top of the head again, as worn during last year's heated term.

SHOES.

The street boot is a short kid boot, with broad soles and good prominent heels; as the season advances low shoes with striped colored stockings will rage. Slippers are worn very low, and many of them excessively plain—others finished with immense bows of Persian gilt and silk.

ALICE ETHEL.

The Saturday Evening Post.

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